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CONFIDENTIAL.

(6958.)

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424

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6957.]

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January to June 1897.

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ERRATA.

Page 109; Inclosure in No. 122; thirteen lines from foot. For "Kayas of Hijisch," read "Kazas of Arjisch."
Page 216, No. 273, line 4. For "No. 420," read "No. 224."
Page 225, No. 228. For "Hadjiri" twice, read "Hadjin."
Page 267, last line. For "Sadrayan," read "Sadrazam."

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CONFIDENTIAL.

(6958.)

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6957.]

No. 1.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 1, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1028 of the 9th ultimo, forwarding copy of a Memorandum drawn up at your instructions by Colonel Ponsonby in regard to the measures necessary for placing at the disposal of the Vali of Van forces sufficient to keep the Kurds in check.

I approve of your Excellency's action in forwarding to the Porte a Memorandum in the sense of Colonel Ponsonby's suggestions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 2.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 1, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1029 of the 9th ultimo, forwarding a Petition addressed to Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum by seven prisoners in the district of Narman, who were condemned to death in June last.

I approve the action which your Excellency proposes to take with regard to the case of these prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 3.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 5.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 2, 1897.

THE Italian Ambassador has communicated to me the substance of a despatch, dated the 20th ultim., containing the reply of his Government to my Circular despatch of the 20th October on the course to be pursued for the introduction of reforms in the Turkish Administration.

The Marquess Visconti Venosta observes that it appears clearly from my despatch that it is a fundamental principle of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government that the reforms to be introduced in the Ottoman Empire in order to preserve it from inevitable ruin must be the work of the unanimous concert of Europe. This is so completely in accordance with the views of the Italian Government, that Signor Venosta, in thanking your Excellency for your important communication, did not hesitate to declare that the views of the Italian Government on this point were identical with those of Her Majesty's

Government. He informed your Excellency that the Italian Government attached the greatest importance to the maintenance of the European concert in regard to Turkish affairs, as being the only efficacious means for bringing about the practical adoption of indispensable reforms in the government and administration of the Ottoman Empire, and that they were accordingly prepared to join in the efforts which Her Majesty's Government proposed to make in this direction in concert with the other Great Powers.

As regards the proposals made in my Circular, Signor Venosta states that the Italian Government agree with Her Majesty's Government that it is urgently necessary in the general interest to bring about a better state of things in the Ottoman Empire. The horrible events in the provinces and in the capital itself, and the inability of the authorities to prevent them, or even to repress them, with the promptitude which every Government is bound to display in such circumstances, have revealed to Europe a condition of affairs absolutely incompatible with the principles of civilization and humanity. The Agents of all the Powers had, moreover, already been unanimous in calling attention to the grave disorders and the maladministration which have latterly rendered intolerable the sufferings not only of the Christian, but also of the Mussulman population. Nor does there appear to be any hope of finding an efficacious remedy in the reforms which were granted more than a year ago to six of the provinces of Asiatic Turkey, nor in their extension to the rest of the Empire. They have not sufficed to arrest and have scarcely even mitigated the evils which harass that country.

Experience has now shown that nothing but the moral authority of the European concert can insure that the necessary reforms shall be efficaciously applied, or that their effects shall be practical and really salutary. The proposal of Her Majesty's Government is the expression of a conviction which is general and undisputed.

The Italian Government cannot doubt that the Sultan will accept any conclusions at which the Great Powers may arrive unanimously, as His Majesty has lately done in the case of the reforms in Crete. Her Majesty's Government, however, consider it indispensable that the Powers should enter into a preliminary engagement, by which the adoption of the reforms unanimously decided upon by them would be assured under all circumstances. In fact, they desire to make it distinctly understood that the Powers, in undertaking the important task which is imposed on them by a deep sense of their responsibility to themselves and to the cause of peace in general, do not intend that their work shall prove abortive. The Italian Government see no reason why they should not declare themselves fully in agreement with the proposal of Her Majesty's Government on this point also.

They now await, with confidence, the speedy transformation of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government, so soon as it shall have obtained the adhesion of all the Powers, into a definite and unanimous agreement, on the basis of which it may be possible for the Ambassadors to undertake the preliminary examination which will be confided to them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 4.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January 3.*)

(No. 1. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 3, 1897, 6 P.M.*

YESTERDAY, at meeting of Ambassadors, we proceeded to examine, point by point, the abuses for which we propose to recommend remedies.

M. Nélidow suggested, under the head of finance, that if the Six Embassies insisted on their Dragomans attending the recently instituted Committee of Audit, this, as well as the Budget, might be converted into realities.

In this form the suggestion would not have much effect, but with the French Ambassador's substitution of Delegates for Dragomans something practical may be made of the idea, provided the Delegates are financial experts.

Two other suggestions have been favourably discussed:—

1. A Council composed of ex-Grand Viziers and other retired officers of State, charged to appoint public functionaries and secure their responsibility; and

2. A Municipality, with a foreign element, for Constantinople.

No. 5.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January 4, 1897.*)

(No. 288.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 20, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a translation of an article in the "Novoe Vremya" of this day's date on the subject of the expectations aroused in Western Europe by M. de Nélidow's visit to St. Petersburgh, and of the consequences which may result from it.*

The writer applies the terms "bold mystification," which events will disprove, to the attempts of the English press to persuade the European public that the instructions furnished to M. de Nélidow are based on some project of reform elaborated by Lord Salisbury, and accepted by all the Powers, whereas if, as is presumably the case, the form of coercion to be exercised towards the Porte has been decided, it has been worked out independently at St. Petersburgh, and fully secured by its being in accordance with French views, the participation of England and the Triple Alliance resuming itself in a more or less sincere support of any demands Russia and France may make of the Porte. The article concludes by remarking that, as there seems to be no valid ground for expecting that the Porte will not yield, the chief interest in events at Constantinople now lies in the influence the joint action of the Powers in this new phase of the Eastern question may have on the general character of European international policy.

The article is an average specimen of the sensitiveness of the press in all that concerns the supposed predominance of Russian influence on the Bosphorus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 6.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January 4, 1897.*)

(No. 294. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 30, 1896.*

ON calling on M. Chichkine to-day he told me that by the courier who had just left he had proposed to M. de Nélidow that the Ambassadors should occupy themselves more immediately with the condition of affairs at Constantinople such as the reorganization of the police and other official matters which were calculated to prevent an outbreak of fresh disorders. He thought that these questions were of more pressing importance than the amelioration of the situation in the provinces.

The news he had received, so far, from Constantinople did not show that much had been done.

He admitted, however, the importance of the Ambassadors' decision not to transact important business in future through the Palace and to insist on political questions being treated by the Porte. His main desire was that the Ambassadors should take steps to guard against a possible disturbance of order in the capital which might involve all the Powers in serious difficulties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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* Not printed.

No. 7.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1087.)

Constantinople, December 26, 1896.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, respecting the agricultural production of the Angora Province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Acting Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 129.)

Angora, December 19, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith to your Excellency two tabular Statements having reference to the agricultural productivity of the province, the one showing the amount realized by the tithes, while the other indicates the amount of grain exported in comparison with the whole crop.

The latter, though very late, owing to the remarkably inclement weather experienced here in the spring, right on into the second week in June, was decidedly good—indeed, much above the average. The result has been considerable activity in the wheat and barley export trade, which, however, has been much hampered and embarrassed by the unwillingness or inability of the Anatolian Railway Company to supply a sufficient number of waggons for the carriage of the grain. For weeks together large quantities of grain were lying more or less exposed to all the chances and changes of late autumn weather both here and at other points along the line, with apparently no chance of finding means of transport.

By degrees, however, waggons were sent from Sakishehr and elsewhere, and most fortunately the weather all through November was unusually fine, so that much less material loss was experienced by exporters than might have been expected. Latterly, however, the Railway Company has been making serious efforts to meet, partially at all events, the wishes and requirements of their customers, which at one time was certainly not the case.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

TABLE showing the amount realized by the Sale of the Tithes of the Vilayet of Angora in the Year 1896.

Sandjaks.	Cazas.	Tithes.	Totals.
		Piastres.	Piastres.
Angora	Angora	229,071	
	Ayash	277,574	
	Beybazar	241,510	
	Nallykhan	263,274	
	Mihalijik	173,697	
	Livrihissar	401,051	
	Haymanna	566,910	
	Bala	470,285	
	Zir	487,107	
	Yohanabad	500,539	
	Chiboukabad	305,414	
	Kalajik	666,191	
			4,072,632
Yuzgat	Yuzgat	924,269	
	Akdagh	472,730	
	Boghazlian	665,581	
			2,061,580
Chorum	Chorum	862,802	
	Sungurlu	511,027	
	Osmanjik	417,964	
	Iskilib	481,326	
			2,274,619
Kirshehr	Kirshehr	997,640	
	Keskin	558,716	
	Mejidié	133,239	
	Avanos	320,534	
			2,010,129
Cesarea	Cæsarea	803,318	
	Dévéli	231,989	
	Injesou	157,170	
			1,191,536
			12,209,896*

* 12,209,894 piastres, at 103 piastres to the £ T. = £ T. 118,542.

Inclosure 3 in No. 7.

STATEMENT of Grain Production of Vilayet of Angora in 1896.

Sandjaks.	Wheat. Whole Crop.	Wheat. Local Consumption.	Wheat. Exported.	Observations.
	Quarters.	Quarters.	Quarters.	
Angora	579,500	472,000	106,500	
Cesarea	166,700	222,900	..	
Yuzgat	454,500	300,000	128,500	Exported— Quarters. Viâ Angora .. .. 50,000 „ Samsoun .. .. 50,000 To Cesarea .. .. 28,500 Total 128,500
Kirshehr	363,500	200,500	153,000	
Chorum	363,500	255,000	108,500	Exported— Quarters. Viâ Angora .. .. 66,700 „ Samsoun .. .. 41,800 Total 108,500
	1,897,700	1,457,300	496,600	

Sandjak of—	Barley. Exported.	Observation.
	Quarters.	
Angora..	250,000	Of a very good quality; is exported almost entirely to England, where it is used for brewing purposes.

No. 8.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 5, 1897.)

(No. 1088.)

My Lord, *Pera, December* 26, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that the appointment of the following members of the new Commission for civil officials has been announced in the "Official Gazette":—

President: Zihni Pasha, Vali of Khodavendighiar.

Members: Hassien Hamid Bey, President of the Commission for the selection of officials (now dissolved); Akif Effendi, Member of Council of State; Section of Interior: Ibrahim Effendi, President of the Financial Council; Constantine Caratheodory Effendi, Member of the Council of State; and Diran Bey, Clerk in the Translator's Department, Foreign Ministry.

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Regulations for the new Commission, which have also been published.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Memorandum by Mr. Blech.

THE Regulations for the new Commission are also published. It will not depend upon any Ministry. It will, upon an Imperial Iradé, examine and report upon officials to be appointed or dismissed; it will investigate into the circumstances of officials, and conduct the preliminary inquiries into legal proceedings instituted against officials. If necessary, it may communicate with provincial authorities. The civil appointments will report to the Grand Vizirate upon the appointment of any officials whose nomination depends upon an Imperial Iradé. These reports will be sent to the Commission, which will examine and report if any objection to the proposed appointment exists. Failing such report by the Commission, no appointment can be made. The reports from civil and financial Inspectors in the provinces will be sent to the Commission, which will examine, and, if necessary, report upon the action to be taken.

These Inspectors must report to the Commission every three months, which Reports are to be registered and at once examined. Any official delaying to register them for twenty-four hours will be at once dismissed. No official can be dismissed without sufficient cause. The Commission will therefore most carefully examine all dismissals, and report if necessary. In case of need the Commission may depute some of its members to proceed to the provinces for the purposes of inquiry. In case of legal proceedings against an official the Commission, if satisfied with the decision, will record it; if not, it will at once report to the Grand Vizirate, when the matter will be laid before the Council of Ministers, which, if necessary, will submit the matter to the Sultan. The President will hand over to one of the members the papers connected with the preliminary inquiry in case of legal proceedings against an official. This member will return them within forty-eight hours, when the matter will be discussed and reported to the Grand Vizirate. The Commission must follow up all its cases and report every six months upon the difficulties it may encounter. The Commission will modify and supplement, if necessary, the records of officials. All matters deputed by the President to a selection of the Commission must be decided within three days. Any member not attending to his duties for three days consecutively without lawful excuse will be considered as having resigned. All laws contrary to these Regulations are repealed.

No. 9.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1090.)

My Lord, *Pera, December* 30, 1896.

THE inclosed extract from the "Levant Herald" of the 28th December, reporting the departure of the Hamidieh regiment from Constantinople, is the first evidence of the reductions that have been made in the budget of the Ministry of War.

The return of the Hamidieh cavalry to their homes will effect a considerable saving, as they only receive pay and rations for themselves and their horses during the time they are embodied and mobilized.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of December 28, 1896.

THE HAMIDIEH REGIMENT.—By order of His Majesty the Sultan, the Hamidieh cavalry regiment, which has been staying in Constantinople for the past six months, will leave to-day to return to Anatolia. The troops will embark at the Galata Quay on the Mahsoussé steamers "Taif," "Shereff Ressan," "Sakaria," and "Saadet," the first three of which will sail for Trebizond, and the fourth for Alexandretta. A fifth steamer will be placed at the disposal of those who may not find accommodation in the other four.

No. 10.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 4, 1897.)

(No. 1093.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 30, 1896.*

IN a despatch respecting the reconversion of the converts to Islam at Birejik, which formed the inclosure in my despatch No. 656 of the 13th August, Mr. Fitzmaurice proposed that rewards, in the shape of decorations and increase of rank, should be conferred on the Kaimakam, Khalil Sidki Effendi, Nedjb Effendi, Hadji Zacheria Agha, and Rifat Chaoush, Moslems of Birejik, who, at considerable personal risk, exerted themselves to save Moslems during the massacre in that town.

I have repeatedly urged on the Grand Vizier that effect should be given to Mr. Fitzmaurice's suggestion, and I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the rewards have now been conferred. As the recipients are locally known as protectors of the Armenians, the good effect on the less favourably disposed Moslems will be considerable.

Of the measures proposed by Mr. Fitzmaurice to secure the future safety of the Armenian converts, all had with this exception been already carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 11.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 4, 1897.)

(No. 1095.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 30, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis concerning abuses in the collection of taxes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 64.)
Sir, *Bitlis, December 6, 1896.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to report that it is true that matters connected with the collection of taxes are dealt with by a special Commission, under the presidency of the Muavin.* The Commission appears to be engaged chiefly in examining defaulting taxpayers brought from the town or from villages by gendarmes, and giving such decisions as that the defaulter is to pay by instalments or is to go to prison.

It is certain that early in November gendarmes were in villages, quartered on the villagers, collecting taxes and seizing property for sale. I have myself seen gendarmes in two villages engaged in this work. In each case they had been for several days in the village. In one case my Dragoman, who was with me, saw a villager being slightly beaten by a gendarme. This was on the 31st October, in Hasskeui, a large village between Bitlis and Mousb, and about ten gendarmes under a Lieutenant had then been there for ten days engaged in tax-gathering, and were about to start for other villages for the same purpose. On the 7th November, on my way back from Moush to Bitlis, I found

* Chef-fun Assistant-Governor.

other gendarmes in the same village carrying on the same work, their comrades having departed.*

From the complaints which continue to reach me from various parts of the Sandjaks of Moush and Bitlis it would seem that no real change in system has been yet carried into effect. Tahsildars have no doubt been appointed within the last few weeks, and the Vali positively asserted to me on the 4th instant that gendarmes were no longer being sent to villages, that a Tahsildar would be sent to each village, and that only when the Tahsildar failed to collect the taxes would gendarmes be sent to bring the defaulters before the authorities, but not to spend any time in the villages. I will endeavour to ascertain whether this is really being done. Only to-day complaints reach me from villages of Akhlat caza of gendarmes now living in the villages and beating the villagers to get taxes out of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 12.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 4, 1897.)

(No. 1096. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 30, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput reporting the action of Shakir Pasha and Sami Bey regarding Armenian political prisoners at Sivas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 62. Confidential.)
Sir, *Kharput, December 12, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that according to information recently received by me from reliable sources here, and now confirmed by testimony which would appear conclusive, Marshal Shakir Pasha sent telegraphic instructions, during his stay in this town, to the Procureur-Général of Sivas to at once release all the Armenian prisoners arrested at Kesserik and conveyed to Sivas for trial, whose names are specified in my despatch No. 10, dated the 14th May last.

In spite of the Marshal's orders, however, the prisoners referred to are still in gaol; and their detention is attributable to the fact of a telegram or letter having been sent either to the Porte or to the Palace by Sami Bey, the Inspector who subsequently left for Sivas, stating that Shakir Pasha was interfering in judicial affairs and was, moreover, arrogating to himself the rights appertaining solely to His Majesty the Sultan by his action in issuing the orders in question.

Kesserik is a village situated at about half-an-hour's distance from Mezreh; and the Imperial Commissioner was therefore clearly in a position to form a correct opinion as to the guilt of the prisoners alluded to from the investigation made by him, so to say, upon the spot.

Sami Bey, whom I met and talked with upon two occasions, does not impress one, I would submit, as being a man of open or unbiassed character. Soon after his arrival at Kharput he summoned, I am informed, the leading Armenians to his presence and, after reproaching them with having given rise to the disturbance here last year, warned

* The other village in which I found gendarmes tax-collecting was Bor, about an hour's journey from Bitlis, on the 22nd October. There, too, the gendarmes had been in the village for several days.

them with a sawing motion of his hand, that if any further local troubles occurred the treatment indicated by that gesture was all that they had to expect; and he dismissed them, it seems, without allowing them to reply or to state their side of the question, although they were naturally anxious to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 13.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January 4, 1897.*)

(No. 1097. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 30, 1896.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 393 of the 14th May, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput concerning the part taken by the Military Commandant in that town in protecting the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 13.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 63. Confidential.)
Sir, *Kharput, December 14, 1896.*

IN my despatch No. 1 of the 25th April last I had the honour to report to your Excellency the circumstances under which the American Mission buildings at Kharput were attacked and partially destroyed during the disturbances last winter, and to submit the grounds upon which was based the charge against Mustafa Pasha, the Military Commandant, of having been instrumental in the destruction of those buildings and of the Protestant quarter in general.

The complicity, if not initiative, of the Commandant in the affair is, I fear, impossible to refute; but the loss of life in the city itself (where not more than 100 Armenians perished) and in the neighbouring villages was slight in comparison with that which occurred in all the other important towns in this vilayet; and I now feel it my duty to report what I have seen and heard in the General's favour, as far as the protection of the Christians in this neighbourhood is concerned, since my arrival here.

The suburb of Mezreh, where the authorities as well as many leading Armenians reside, was protected by Mustafa Pasha during the troubles; Turks and Armenians alike assure me that had it not been for the prompt action taken by him the Kurds would assuredly have plundered and burned the Armenian shops and houses there.

During the recent panic among the Christians, reported in my despatch to your Excellency No. 15 of the 21st September last, Mustafa Pasha adopted efficacious measures to prevent any outbreak; and all that I have since heard confirms my own impression at the time that, had he not exercised his personal influence and authority over the higher and lower class Moslems at that critical moment, serious disturbances would have occurred at Mezreh, Kharput, and in the villages.

One morning about three weeks ago an Armenian from Hoghi called upon the American missionaries and informed them that the previous evening the Agas of his village had met together and had held a consultation, part of which he had overheard, as to the best means of creating a disturbance with a view to sacking Mezreh. The chief Aga finally dismissed them, saying: "Mustafa Pasha prevented us last time, and if he leaves we will make a conflagration; but if he stays, we will find an opportunity for doing so in spite of him."

The Armenian, who is the servant of one of the Agas alluded to, was sent on to report the matter to me; but he begged me not to divulge their names, because, he said, should I do so they would be sure to hear further of the matter and to suspect him, in which case his life would be endangered.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 14.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January 4, 1897.*)

(No. 1098.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 30, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis concerning the Redifs in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 65.)
Sir, *Bitlis, December 7, 1896.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 114 of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Redifs in the vilayet appear to have been now all disbanded.

The "Bitlis," the official Gazette of the vilayet, of the 26th ultimo, publishes an appeal to the loyal and generous subjects of the Empire to subscribe for the equipment of the Redifs. The appeal is not specially addressed to Mussulmans, and no distinction between Mussulman and non-Mussulman subscribers is alluded to. A list of subscribers is published in the same number, and a second list in the next number, viz., that of the 3rd instant; and further subscription lists are to be published in future numbers. According to the two lists published, the Vali and his family have subscribed in all 20,500 piastres, while 131 other Mussulmans have subscribed in all 16,000 piastres in sums varying from 10 to 1,000 piastres.

The only Christian subscriber whose name has yet been published is the Greek engineer of the vilayet, who is put down for 500 piastres.

The total subscribed, as hitherto announced, is thus 37,000 piastres.

During the last two or three days reports have been reaching me that strong pressure is being put on Christians as well as Mussulmans to induce them to subscribe, and it is rumoured that a new order has been received from Constantinople to the effect that a sum of money—some say 5,000,000 piastres—is to be obtained from the population of the vilayet, not for the equipment of Redifs, but for a general arming of Mussulmans. The rumour, however, is of doubtful authenticity, and it is difficult to ascertain what foundation there may be for it.

As an example of my difficulties, I may perhaps be allowed to mention that the Commander of the troops here has not returned the visit which I paid him two months ago.

Having shown him the polite attention of calling on him first, I find myself the object of this rudeness on his part, and friendly intercourse between us is of course now hardly possible. I would venture to suggest that the Commander might be given to understand that he should return my call, as it seems especially desirable that I, being the only Consular officer and perhaps indeed the only European in the vilayet, should be treated with ordinary civility by the authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. B. MONAHAN.

P.S.—It is supposed that the Vali, having received no pay for several months past, does not actually pay the subscriptions which are placed opposite his name, but deducts the amounts from his claims on the Government. The Christian Muavin* lately assured me that the Vali had received no pay this year.

J. H. M.

No. 15.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1100.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 955 of the 17th November last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the departure of the Judicial Inspectors for Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 125.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 18, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 114 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Judicial Inspectors for the Vilayets of Sivas and Erzeroum, Taïb Bey and Yorghaki Effendi, who arrived here on the 5th November and shortly afterwards proceeded to the southern cazas of this vilayet, left Erzeroum yesterday on their way to Constantinople.

During their short stay here they do not appear to have effected very much, and I do not anticipate any great change in the working of the judicial Department in consequence of their visit, although it is perhaps premature to say so before the nature of their reports becomes known. But I understand that they have expressed themselves of opinion that the Vali had already taken almost all the measures which it would have been their duty to recommend, and that their adverse criticisms are chiefly confined to the composition of the Commercial Court of Erzeroum—a detail of comparatively minor importance at the present moment.

It is true that Raouf Pasha has rendered important services in procuring the dismissal of several of the worst members of the judicial staff, and endeavours to remedy some of the more crying abuses which happen to be brought to his knowledge. But it would be absurd to pretend that the judicial, police, and prison Administrations of the province are in anything approaching to a satisfactory condition, or that they can be placed upon a proper footing, without the application of far-reaching and costly reforms, such as his Excellency is at present quite unable and perhaps unwilling to attempt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

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* Assistant Governor.

No. 16.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1101.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, inclosing statistics of the disorders in the Sivas Vilayet in 1895 and 1896.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 37.)
Sir, *Sivas, December* 15, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit statistics of the disorders that have occurred in the Sivas Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Statistics of Disorders in the Sivas Vilayet, 1895-96.

Date of Disorders.	Names of Towns or Villages where Disorders occurred.	Number of Armenian houses in each Place.	Number of Houses or Shops looted: Houses.	Number of Houses or Shops looted: Shops.	Number of Churches or Monasteries looted: Churches.	Number of Churches or Monasteries looted: Monasteries.	Number of houses burnt or ruined.	Number of Armenians killed.	Number of Turks killed.	Number of Women raped.	Number of Converts to Islam.	Approximate Estimate of Loss.	Remarks.
												£ T.	
November 12, 1895	Sivas	2,400	350	2,000	1		3	200	3	17	3	419,100	A leading Turk at Sivas told me that, some time before the massacre, the Vali of Sivas told him that there would be a massacre at Sivas.
	Koldi	25	25		1							4,000	
	Bin-Dan	50	50		1							6,555	
	Shin-Kemrik	7	7									100	
	Perwiss	7	7									170	
	Tavra	180	180									480	
	Serpendjek	3	3									75	
	Sivri	2	2									130	
	Seid-Hassan	18	18									900	
	Bin-Gent	70	65				1	25				5,441	
	Ouleh	155	155				7	97		37		41,886	
	Tamatch	70	70				7	50				11,856	
	Magara	77	77					45		7		10,522	
	Boz-Armoud	25	25									2,333	
	Kamal											5,071	
November 1895	Roumoune	52										1,805	
	Agadjik-Koï	15	15									1,506	
	Manjilik	150					60	37				18,357	
	Djez-Euren	25	25									380	
	Ueulue Euren	13	13									325	
	Yeni-Hissar	41	41									4,987	
	Djidou Sidjan Hoyoun	20										150	
Kerek-Hissar		30										2,515	
	Komise	60			1							185	
	Yeni-Hissar	65	20		1							3,571	
	Djemen-Yenidjé	65	45					28	1	30		11,882	
	Ighindjik	18	8									992	
	Tombrighé	48	15									2,057	
	Azizvié	8	8									800	
	Ishtjanjik	28	28									2,750	
	Tchay-Kouri	18	18									800	
	Haydan	60										1,912	Pingan.—Two days before the massacre, Nail Bey, who is travelling ostensibly on the part of the Porte to collect statistics of Armenian losses last year, accompanied by Abaosh Bey, a Turk of Djerigh, arrived at Pingan. They were joined by a Lieutenant Kamil, of the 74th Regiment, 4th Army Corps. An Armenian servant in a house they stayed overheard them discussing the projected massacre. Nail Bey named some Armenians he wished to spare. Abaosh Bey said, "We are sent here to destroy all, and if we do not we are responsible to the Sultan." Lieutenant Kamil then drew his sword and swore to obey the order he had received. Abaosh Bey told him to urge his soldiers to kill by telling them they would be rewarded in Paradise. The next morning Nail and Abaosh Bey left. When the smoke of the burning houses at Zimara was seen, Lieutenant Kamil sent a party of soldiers there, and told the villagers of Pingan they had nothing to fear, as he would protect them. He prevented them from escaping, but what dark many got away. During the night, news was brought to this Lieutenant that the Kurds had arrived from Zimara, and also a party of soldiers from a neighbouring village. A bugle was sounded. The soldiers and Kurds paraded. At dawn they fired the village. The women were stripped naked, on the pretext that they had gold concealed in their clothes. Some threw themselves into the river, some into the flames of the burning houses. One woman who did this had five children in her arms, and I am told the group could be seen burning for fully half-an-hour. Most of the villagers were hiding among the rocks, and when the village was lighted the soldiers and Kurds hunted them, shooting those they could see. A bugle then sounded and the firing ceased. The priest of the village was found after this, and the Lieutenant ordered him to be shot, as Abaosh Bey had specially desired it. One or two soldiers then killed one or two Armenians with their bayonets, remarking that, as the Lieutenant had killed the priest, they might as well kill, too. Some time after, when the Kaimakam visited Pingan, an Armenian heard him say that he had received orders not to protect Pingan. Thirty wounded have died since massacre.
	Ardjé	20										1,000	
	Sarchli	12										800	
	Sarmashli	80											
	Ekrik	280											
	Ghighi	35											
	Sivglene	65											
	Sasi-Oglan	40											
	Gurun	1,800	1,800		2		1,200	1,120	90	180	8	1,000,000	Ardjé and district is inhabited by Circassians, who protected the Armenians against all attempts of the Turks. Some pillage occurred; but the property was restored, owing to the efforts of the Circassian Chiefs.
	Kara-Hissar	110	110		1		45	30				3,000	The Kurds and Turks from other villages arrived in neighbourhood of Gurun on the 8th November. The Armenians had two Martini rifles and a fair supply of revolvers, &c. With these they defended themselves and killed about fifty Kurds with a loss of only six of themselves, and the Kurds were unable to enter the town. The Vali of Sivas then ordered the Armenian Archbishop to telegraph an order to the Armenians of Gurun to give up their arms to the Government and that they would be protected by the Government. As soon as the arms had been given up, the Kurds entered the town and the massacre began. The Catholic Armenians had, by previous arrangement, placed a red flag on their houses and were unmolested.
November 1895	Kara-Véran	15	15				5					1,200	
	Kafir-Véran	4	4									1,000	
	Char-Kishla	7											
	Lissanli	150	150		1			1				6,750	
	Kara-Gueul	145	145		1		1					6,000	
	Djépni	178	150		1		1					5,000	
	Kourtpo-Koya	33	33		1			1				450	
	Bonrkan	75	75		1			1				1,250	
	Déndilé	160	160		1			1				3,500	
	Pousse	60	60		1					10		1,200	
	Tepeche	70	70		1			3				4,200	
	Kentarose	38	38		1		10	1				2,200	
September 1896	Késné	75	75		1		12	8				1,800	
Ditto	Zimara	70	70		1		15	12				1,600	
Ditto	Pingan	195	195		1		100	71	2				
	Mirvana	40	40		1							1,400	
	Harmanli	100	20		1							1,000	
	Selmijan	30	17		1			1				800	

Date of Disorders	Names of Towns or Villages where Disorders occurred	Number of Armenian houses in each Place.	Number of Houses or Shops looted.		Number of Churches or Monasteries looted.		Number of Houses of Literature burned.	Number of Armenians killed.	Number of Turks killed.	Number of Women outraged.	Number of Converts to Islam.	Approximate Estimate of Loss.	Remarks.
			Houses.	Shops.	Churches.	Monasteries.						£ T.	
November 1895	Gazi-Magara	80	80	..	1	..	13	72	6	32	..	9,800	Gazi-Magara.—At this village and in some of the neighbouring villages many of the villagers turned Mussulman, and an Imam settled in one of them. When I visited the village I told them to inform me if this Imam interfered with their church or otherwise, and shortly after the Imam left and the villagers reverted to Christianity.
	Fasla-Keuy	35	34	..	..	..	11	..	..	..	..	2,150	
	Ekikdjé ..	14	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	300	
	Yuje-Altoun	95	95	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,250	
	Tékmén ..	65	65	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,600	
	Kara-Veran	12	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	180	
	Aïa-Kilisé ..	18	18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	530	
	Diéblik ..	15	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Kara-Pinar	60	60	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,100	
	Djévirmé ..	11	11	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	135	
	Ghémérék ..	570	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,980	
	Tchaldjouk	17	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	250	
	Yaz-Alti ..	15	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	150	
	Sari Oglan ..	80	70	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,100	
	Dérékié ..	350	350	100	3	..	..	115	12	..	..	100,000	
	Arabanlé ..	200	200	15	1	..	57	26	..	110	..	175,000	
	Yéni-Han ..	120	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1,000	
	Sari-Hassan	15	15	..	..	..	1	32	..	..	..	1,166	
	Kara-Hissar ..	400	80	..	2	1	..	250	..	..	..	7,000	
	Tamiata ..	310	310	50	..	..	..	80	..	..	..	14,750	
	Djédak ..	90	90	..	..	..	..	120	..	..	..	2,500	
	Anerghi ..	80	80	..	..	..	..	30	..	..	..	3,000	
	Bozsaid ..	75	75	..	..	..	..	25	..	..	..	2,250	
	Zéléri ..	70	70	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,800	
	Avoutsagatch	5	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100	
	Keylissar ..	53	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	112	..	
	Hamidié ..	48	48	18	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,400	
	Afiadjéra ..	6	6	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	500	
	Erdiresse ..	390	237	60	2	..	16	31	3	..	..	10,000	
	Sasa ..	80	80	..	..	..	..	38	..	..	..	2,500	
	Yéni-Keuy	34	34	..	..	..	..	14	..	..	..	850	
	Ghumeldjina	25	25	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	950	
	Médéla-Nour	120	60	..	1	..	..	61	..	..	..	1,250	
	Kurtaran ..	40	40	..	..	..	..	13	..	..	..	850	
	Eski-Chéhir	50	50	..	..	..	..	20	..	..	..	900	
	Peurk ..	280	280	..	..	..	..	60	..	..	..	1,500	
	Argoviz ..	80	80	..	..	..	..	20	..	..	..	2,500	
	1re Eshidér	390	390	..	1	..	40	63	..	..	..	6,000	
	2e Eshidér ..	190	190	..	1	..	20	..	..	..	..	3,500	
	Agrancse ..	120	120	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	750	
	Sévandik ..	50	50	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,100	
	Abana ..	60	60	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	850	
	Avsoundon ..	30	30	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	750	The only loss at Tokat consisted of cattle looted in the neighbourhood. The town was protected by Mustapha Pasha, the Ferik.
	Djiftlik ..	30	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,350	The inhabitants of Kapou-Agri turned Mussulman, except three families. The church was turned into a mosque, and an Imam sent to teach them. On representations being made to the Vali, the Imam was sent away, and an Armenian priest went from Tokat. The church was restored. The inhabitants openly declared themselves Christians. A force of ten cavalry soldiers was sent, and still remain, to avoid any disturbance.
	Akmanik ..	65	..	..	1	..	35	..	..	..	..	1,800	
	Aghillar ..	35	35	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	150	
	Djorak ..	6	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	850	
	Keatch ..	30	30	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	300	
	Houdouk ..	15	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	500	
	Hanam ..	25	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	300	
	Tokat ..	1,780	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	300	
	Djiftlik ..	80	80	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2,500	Amasia.—In a previous despatch I gave the numbers killed as 40. The Blue Book states that the Turkish Government acknowledge 80 to have been killed. I can find no confirmation of this, and believe the number here given (14) to be accurate.
November 1895	Yatanich ..	72	72	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	1,650	
	Ghezhan-Seray	60	60	..	1	..	..	78	..	3	..	6,000	
	Gulet-Aghia	40	40	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	1,200	
	Bahuse ..	55	55	..	1	..	..	82	..	..	..	2,800	In a previous despatch, written at the time of the disorders at Vézir-Kupru, I stated the number killed as 50. I do not know by what authority the Blue Book states the number killed as 200, but I can find no confirmation of it, and the number here given (72) is confirmed by the Armenian Archbishop.
	Taita-Oren ..	40	40	..	1	..	..	17	..	3	..	3,500	
	Bekmédjik ..	76	76	..	1	..	..	5	..	..	..	2,800	
	Ogouz ..	16	16	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	800	
	Bedir ..	10	10	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,000	
	Kirkarac ..	50	29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	500	
	Kéhéi ..	6	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,200	
	Bivéri ..	10	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	80	
	Zilé ..	400	320	150	..	..	..	188	..	3	..	150,000	To the total of deaths must be added those who died from wounds and a considerable number who died from fear, also those who died from want and exposure, consequent of the disorders. Between 7,000 and 8,000 might be regarded as a minimum.
	Nikser ..	350	270	94	..	..	..	199	16	..	1	120,000	
June 1895 ..	Kapou-Agri ..	107	107	..	1	..	..	8	..	..	..	1,500	
	Beck (Erbaa) ..	230	34	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1,100	
	Amasia ..	1,900	5	340	..	..	..	41	3	..	..	250,000	The greater part of the loot passed into the hands of Turkish officials, not only by means of agents employed during the actual disorders, but later, when the Government pretended to search for the stolen property with a view to restoring it, the officials further enriched themselves by seizing anything of value. Sefket Pasha had the hypocrisy to express his regret to me that more property had not been restored in this province. I told him the reason was that the officials themselves had stolen it. He pretended to doubt this, and I then named several places where I knew it to be the case, and sent him a man who was prepared to prove the charge. Nothing was done.
	Mérzifoun ..	970	7	270	..	..	..	126	3	2	..	150,000	
	Yénidjé ..	70	25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,250	
	Kemr-Keuy	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
November 1895	Gumuch Dadjikoy	400	2	112	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	31,000	
	Gumuch Keuy	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Vézir-Kupru ..	180	130	105	1	..	28	72	..	7	..	70,000	
	Kavza ..	50	47	42	1	..	..	11	..	..	..	9,000	
	Médjid-Kuru	60	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	750	
	Ladik ..	40	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
	Totals ..	23,790	11,015	3,341	87	5	2,027	3,263	241	584	139	3,819,686	

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No. 17.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1102.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1052 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting further arrests and capture of arms in Passim.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 124.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 17, 1896.

AS a sequel to the encounter between a band of armed Armenians and a cavalry patrol, reported in my despatch No. 122 of the 3rd instant, numerous arrests have been made in some of the frontier villages of Passim, where the first and second Commissaries of Police have been busily engaged for the last fortnight in following up the revolutionaries and their alleged accomplices. Between forty and fifty villagers have been brought into Erzeroum, a considerable number of whom are from the village of Komadsor, and fifty-nine rifles, mostly Martinis and Berdans, have been captured, seven of which bear a mark said to be the stamp of an Armenian Revolutionary Society.

The Vali of Erzeroum proposed to allow these arms to be publicly exhibited as a proof of the activity of the revolutionaries, but was dissuaded from this course by the advice of the French Acting Consul, who warned him that it might only excite the fanaticism of the Mussulmans against the Armenian population in general.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 18.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1103.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 30, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout reporting the deportation of the Druses of the Hauran for military service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 79.)
Sir, *Beirout, December* 17, 1896.

WITH reference to Mr. Jones' despatch No. 69 of the 24th November, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that 483 Druses from the Hauran, who have been detained in the barracks of Beirout for some time, were shipped yesterday as conscripts for military service on an Ottoman steam-ship bound, it is believed, to Tripoli in Barbary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 19.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4, 1897.)

(No. 1104.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 31, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a Circular *note verbale* which I have received from the Sublime Porte, stating that no Armenians will be allowed to enter the country unless furnished with a passport duly *visé* by an Ottoman Consular official.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 19.

Note Verbale.

IL résulte d'un rapport de la Préfecture de Police que des Arméniens arrivent parfois de l'étranger à Constantinople avec des passeports dépourvus du visa Consulaire Ottoman.

Cet état de choses, contraire aux dispositions du Règlement en vigueur, étant de nature à favoriser l'entrée dans le pays des agitateurs, le Gouvernement Impérial a décidé d'interdire l'accès du territoire Ottoman aux Arméniens qui viendraient désormais avec des passeports non visés.

Le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur de prier l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique de vouloir bien porter cette décision à la connaissance de qui de droit.

Le 20 Décembre, 1896.

No. 20.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 4.)

(No. 1. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January* 1, 1897.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me the day before yesterday and spoke to me very confidentially about the state of affairs at Constantinople. He said that considerable reforms had been undertaken, and it was only natural that some time should elapse before they could be carried out, and there was, moreover, the difficulty caused by the want of money.

On my asking whether it was true that great discontent existed among the Mussulmans at Constantinople, Galeb Bey replied that in his official capacity he could not admit that such was the case. Speaking privately, however, he could not deny that there existed a great amount of discontent, which was directed against the Sultan himself. It was a mistake to hold His Majesty's entourage responsible. Neither Izzet Bey nor any other Palace official had any real influence with the Sultan. They were merely instruments in His Majesty's hands, and the initiative of all that was done or left undone belonged to His Majesty alone. Perhaps the most alarming feature of the whole situation was the fact that the Sultan even now did not seem to realize the gravity of the situation, and apparently continued his old system of seeking to sow dissension among the Representatives of the Powers at Constantinople. His Majesty refused to believe that the Powers were really in accord, and Galeb Bey feared that His Majesty's obstinacy might compel the Powers to take up a position from which it would be impossible for them to recede, and which might lead to a catastrophe.

Galeb Bey requested me to consider what he had said as strictly confidential.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 21.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 4.)

(No. 1. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Vienna, January 4, 1897.*

DURING my interview with Count Goluchowski this afternoon, when I saw his Excellency for the first time, he gave me some account of the last Ambassadors' meeting at Constantinople, at which, in his opinion, little progress had been made.

The following is the substance of what he told me. M. de Nélidow still avoids practical discussion and persists in bringing forward vague proposals; his last suggestions, which found favour only with his French colleague, relate to financial points.

Referring to the proposals put forward by M. de Nélidow concerning the European Provinces, Count Goluchowski said that he believed that both his Excellency and the Russian Government were acting in good faith on this point, and that their desire that no trouble should arise in the Balkans is as sincere as that of Austria-Hungary. Count Goluchowski is, however, of opinion that there is no need to apprehend serious danger from that quarter, owing to the ease with which the various States which might be favourable to disturbance can be controlled: Bulgaria by Russia, Greece by Great Britain, and Servia by this Empire. It is necessary, however, to deal at once with the central danger which is the result of misgovernment at Constantinople for not only the safety of the Armenians, but that of the Christians and even of the foreign Embassies, might be imperilled at any moment.

Count Goluchowski's language remains the same as regards the urgency of previously concerting the means of enforcing, in case of need, the recommendations which are eventually to be presented to the Sultan.

He says that nothing will induce his Government to expose itself to humiliation by urging proposals which, for lack of means of enforcing their execution, would be set at naught. Austria-Hungary would withdraw from the concert sooner than submit to this; his Excellency added ironically that the Sultan might then perhaps seek to shelter himself behind her in accordance with his customary tactics.

No. 22.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Anthopoulo Pasha.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, January 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 27th ultimo, informing me of the steps which have recently been taken by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan for the introduction of various reforms in the administration of the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 23.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 1.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 2, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship an extract from the official portion of the "Journal de Saint-Pétersbourg," in which it is stated that His Majesty the Emperor has authorized subscriptions being raised for the benefit of the Armenians who have fled from Turkey and have taken refuge on Russian territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Extract from the "Journal de Saint-Pétersbourg" of December 21, 1896 (January 2, 1897).

SA Majesté l'Empereur, sur le rapport du Ministre de l'Intérieur, a gracieusement accordé le 11 Décembre l'autorisation d'ouvrir dans tout l'Empire une souscription dont le produit sera destiné à alléger le sort des Arméniens qui, s'étant enfuis de Turquie, se sont réfugiés sur le territoire de la Russie. Les sommes souscrites seront reçues exclusivement par des fonctionnaires et par des institutions spécialement désignés à cet effet et elles seront transmises par les Gouverneurs de chaque province à l'Administrateur-Général du Caucase, pour qu'elles soient distribuées aux Arméniens nécessiteux sous sa surveillance immédiate.

No. 24.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 2. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 5, 1897, noon.*

THE question of a European Commission for the Asiatic provinces was considered at the Ambassadors' meeting yesterday.

A telegram from St. Petersburgh, urging the necessity for early report in anticipation of further outbreaks, was communicated to us by M. Nélidow.

We meet again on Thursday next.

No. 25.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 12.)
My Lord, *Paris, January 8, 1897.*

M. HANOTAUX is still absent in the south of France, but has announced his return for to-morrow evening, when he will reach Paris in company with M. Méline.

In his absence, I this afternoon saw M. Nisard, the Political Director of the Ministry, who said that M. Cambon's reports from Constantinople continued to be satisfactory, and that it appeared certain that the impression produced on the Sultan by the evident accord between the Ambassadors, and the absolute secrecy of their consultations, is very great.

The general situation in Turkey appears to M. Nisard to have decidedly improved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 26.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 4.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 9, 1897, 11·50 A.M.*

MR. MONAHAN telegraphs that the Bishop of Bitlis was sent to Diarbekir on 5th January. It seems that he will be confined in a monastery there.

No. 27.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 10.)

(No. 6. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 10, 1897, 8 P.M.*

AT the last two Ambassadors' meetings we have agreed on the draft of the first chapter of our recommendations, that is, the institution of a Supreme Council of Control and Discipline.

The financial question is the next point to be dealt with.

No. 28.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 1.) *Constantinople, January 4, 1897.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1019 of the 9th December, reporting the ill-treatment of certain Armenian prisoners at Erzeroum, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I brought the case to the attention of the Sublime Porte. The Vali of Erzeroum has reported to the Grand Vizier that the Armenians in question were only arrested after the police had obtained proof of their being connected with the revolutionary Committees. He further stated that they at first admitted their culpability, but subsequently tried to withdraw their admission, and concluded by saying that, in spite of stringent inquiries, no proof whatever was forthcoming of their having been beaten by the police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 29.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 5. Secret.) *Constantinople, January 6, 1897.*

My Lord,

THE Ambassadors have now held seven meetings, at which the situation of the Ottoman Empire and the reforms which might be introduced into it have been discussed.

Cretan affairs and other local questions have also been considered, so that the time actually devoted to the main business in hand has not been very long.

I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum stating the principal evils for which we consider that remedies are to be sought. This paper is compiled from notes contributed by each of the Ambassadors.

At the meeting held on the 22nd the Russian Ambassador proposed that we should report to our Governments on each point as it arose, beginning with the Macedonian question.

I insisted on the necessity of our considering the entire situation before we attempted to draw up a Report. This view was supported at the next meeting by the Austrian and Italian Representatives, and was eventually accepted by M. de Néhdow.

At the subsequent meetings we have talked over, one by one, the points laid down in the Memorandum, and the various remedies which might be suggested. Our conversations, however, have been of an informal character, and their object has been rather to bring about a general understanding as to the limits that we are respectively prepared to go to in our recommendations than actually to formulate them. In view of the divergent interests represented at our meetings, this course seemed necessary in order to avoid a conflict of opinion that would have rendered an eventual agreement more difficult.

The Austrian Ambassador who, as doyen, presides at the meetings, attaches great importance to everything being done with due deliberation, and I believe that the result has been to form a general body of opinion on the questions we have passed in review, which will make it easier to arrive at common resolutions.

Under these circumstances I have felt that I can best contribute to the end which Her Majesty's Government have in view, by abstaining from bringing forward any elaborate plan of action.

I have accordingly at our meetings reserved my criticisms and suggestions until the opinions of my colleagues, especially that of Russia, have been expressed, and have taken advantage of private interviews to try and bring about unanimity.

The French Ambassador has shown unusual reserve, and seems unwilling to commit himself to any views that might separate him from his Russian ally.

Baron Saurma is inclined to play the part of a drag on the coach-wheels, and the only proposal which he has originated, and never fails to put forward, is that the Powers should purchase the support of the Mussulman subjects of the Sultan by taking measures to provide for the regular payment of soldiers and officials.

The Italian Ambassador does not take a strong personal line in any special direction, but contributes useful suggestions on points of detail.

Nothing has been definitively settled at present, but it is likely that among the recommendations we shall submit, will be found some to the following effect :—

A Council composed, *ex officio*, of the ex-Grand Viziers and other retired functionaries, who will be charged with the supervision of certain branches of the Administration, such as the selection and responsibility of public functionaries, the Budget, &c.

A Municipality for Constantinople, on which the foreign element will be represented.

Reform of the Police to be carried out by an European Chief of the Police.

Financial reform, which will include provisions for the regular payment of the Civil Service and the army.

Judicial reform, including that of the prisons.

International Commissions for the European and Anatolian provinces.

Our meetings during the last three weeks have been somewhat interfered with by the Latin and Greek festivals, but they will now, I believe, take place more frequently, and the Representatives generally expressed at our last meeting a desire to come as speedily as possible to an agreement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Opinions expressed by the Ambassadors in their Meetings in December 1896 on the Internal Condition of Turkey.

Ingérence du Palais.

LA cause dominante des maux qui affligent actuellement la Turquie doit être recherchée dans l'absorption arbitraire par le Palais de tous les pouvoirs qui, d'après les lois existantes, devraient être distribués parmi les différentes branches de l'Administration.

Cette absorption, qui s'est exagérée dans les proportions croissantes pendant les dix dernières années, a pour première conséquence d'annuler l'autorité du Grand Vizir, dont devraient dépendre les Ministres. Chacun d'entre eux comme le Grand Vizir lui-même, ne reconnaissent aujourd'hui que les ordres directs du Sultan.

Il en est de même dans les provinces où les autorités locales se trouvent ainsi émancipées vis-à-vis des Valis, qui, à leur tour, sont constamment exposés à recevoir des instructions privées émanant de Yildiz en dehors du Gouvernement Central.

Le Palais arrête de la sorte le fonctionnement de la Sublime Porte, qui a pour ainsi dire cessé d'exister comme organe actif du Gouvernement. C'est le Palais qui nomme ou qui révoque les employés, qui en fixe à son gré les traitements et qui intervient dans tous les actes même les plus ordinaires de l'Administration, en soumettant toutes sortes d'affaires à des influences secrètes, qui les détournent de leur voie légitime.

Une des conséquences de cet état de choses est d'encourager le système des requêtes individuelles adressées directement au Sultan afin d'en obtenir la satisfaction à l'aide de ces influences.

Pour ce qui touche en particulier aux affaires intéressant les sujets étrangers cette ingérence réussit à rendre extrêmement difficile l'action des Représentants qui en ont charge. Quand à la suite de quelque négociation laborieuse avec la Sublime Porte ils sont en droit de considérer une question quelconque comme terminée, il se trouve que des instructions inattendues en ont compromis la solution convenue et que les dispositions dont le Grand Vizir ou le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères leur avaient donné communication officielle sont resté sans effet.

Fonctionnaires.

Le nombre des fonctionnaires n'est pas proportionné avec les besoins réels du service.

Aucune règle ne préside à leur choix ni au point de vue de la compétence ni à celui de la moralité des candidats que n'entoure la moindre garantie.

Aussi bien de ces fonctionnaires dont la nomination est due à la faveur ou à la corruption ont-ils la plus mauvaise réputation, qu'ils justifient pleinement par leur conduite.

Il n'y a d'ailleurs pour ces emplois pas de hiérarchie proprement dite, les mêmes hommes étant admis indifféremment aux fonctions les plus disparates.

La façon arbitraire dont les traitements des fonctionnaires sont fixés et dont ces fonctionnaires eux-mêmes peuvent être avancés ou révoqués, prive leur carrière de toute garantie.

Il n'existe au surplus aucune voie légale par laquelle les employés qui sont lésés dans leur droit aient moyen de recourir contre les mesures dont ils ont été l'objet.

Enfin, l'irrégularité dans le paiement des appointements de toute catégorie constitue un obstacle fondamental à l'amélioration de la qualité des fonctionnaires. Ceux là même parmi eux qui seraient par exception honnêtes et consciencieux sont mis dans l'impossibilité de se maintenir tels, alors que pendant de longs mois ils sont privés des moyens élémentaires de subsistance pour eux et pour leurs familles.

Même sans ces retards de paiements il règne la plus injuste irrégularité soit entre les différentes Administrations, soit entre les différentes catégories d'employés, dont les plus humbles sont généralement les plus sacrifiés.

Justice.

L'Administration de la Justice est généralement déplorable.

Il se trouve parmi les Juges des Tribunaux quelques bons éléments mais les Magistrats formant le Ministère Public (Procureurs, Substituts, Juges d'Instruction) sont pour la plupart des hommes ignares ou corrompus.

Le Ministère de la Justice lui-même est d'ailleurs le centre de cette corruption, étant avéré que les Jugements y sont rendus presque publiquement aux parties intéressées.

Aucune loi ni règlement s'est appliqué d'une manière suivie.

Il y a lieu enfin de relever le trouble qu'amène dans l'administration de la justice l'ingérence arbitraire du Palais, qui a le pouvoir d'ordonner directement des arrestations, des enquêtes, perquisitions, &c., et qui ne craint même pas d'intervenir dans les affaires civiles en imposant aux Juges telle ou elle sentence ou en arrêtant le cours des actes de procédure.

Des sujets étrangers ont été gravement atteints dans leurs intérêts par de telles violations de droit sans qu'il ait été possible d'en obtenir la réparation.

Police.

Les agents de la police sont recrutés parmi les gens de la pire espèce.

Il n'y a pas d'acte arbitraire qui ne puisse être commis impunément sous l'égide du Ministre de la Police qui relève directement du Palais.

Des innocents sont arrêtés chaque jour sous les prétextes les plus futiles et sans qu'aucune forme de procès ne vienne justifier les motifs de leur détention.

Il s'ensuit que des agents de la police ont pu, surtout dans des temps de trouble,

extorquer à bon nombre de malheureux le prix de leur liberté pour la simple menace de les dénoncer comme suspects.

L'état des prisons est déplorable dans la capitale comme dans les provinces.

Dans les cas d'arrestation préventive il n'est point pourvu d'une manière régulière à l'entretien des prisonniers, qui sont parfois réduits à mendier leur nourriture.

Les prisonniers sont exposés aux pires sévices, et des témoignages de personnes dignes de foi s'accordent à affirmer que la torture est appliquée dans les prisons de la capitale et de Yildiz.

A côté de la police régulière il existe en outre une police secrète dont les fils se trouvent au Palais et qui forme un vaste réseau d'espionnage enveloppant dans ses vexations la vie privée des citoyens de toutes classes.

Cet état de choses, qui pèse sur tout le pays, est également préjudiciable aux colonies étrangères qui, loin de trouver dans la police une protection légitime, voient dans cette institution un danger pour leur sécurité.

Municipalités.

Il n'existe pas de Municipalités en état de fonctionner. Faute de revenus et d'une administration régulière ces institutions sont dans l'impossibilité absolue de remplir leurs fonctions.

Finances.

L'absence d'un Budget public et régulier rend difficile d'apprécier exactement la mesure du déficit financier.

Tout indique cependant le désarroi dans lequel se trouve l'Administration des Finances, dont la détresse est suffisamment prouvée par les faits les plus évidents.

Tout en tenant compte de certaines irrégularités on peut dire que la moyenne des arriérés dans les traitements des employés et le solde de l'armée a pris actuellement des proportions qui n'ont jamais été atteintes dans les dernières vingt années.

Il en est de même pour tous les autres paiements qui incombent à différents titres aux Caisses de l'État ou à celles des vilayets.

Un des éléments principaux de ce désordre est le défaut de toute spécialisation des recettes et des dépenses telle qu'un Budget régulièrement établi pourrait seul assurer.

Un arbitraire absolu préside par contre à l'emploi de sommes considérables qui peuvent être à tout propos affectés à des besoins entièrement étrangers à leur destination primitive.

Ici aussi l'ingérence du Palais exerce son influence délétère, soit en fixant en dehors de toute règle les appointements des employés, soit en distribuant des gratifications extraordinaires aux personnes favorisées ou en provoquant directement à des services non prévus

Quant aux dépenses propres de la Liste Civile elles échappent à tout contrôle et la mesure n'en est même pas connue approximativement.

Pour y faire face, certains revenus de l'État non spécifiés sont versés directement au Palais et de simples ordres du Sultan lui permettent de mettre la main sur les fonds appartenant aux Caisses des Ministères ou des vilayets.

Armée.

A défaut d'Administration de Justice, de Finances, le seul appui solide qui reste aujourd'hui au Gouvernement consiste dans l'armée, dont chacun reconnait les bons éléments constitutifs.

Cependant, la valeur même de cette armée est mise à une rude épreuve par les privations auxquelles sont exposés les soldats, réduits dans certaines provinces à un complet dénûment.

Les officiers sont en retard de leur solde ; le mauvais système de l'avancement, basé exclusivement sur la faveur, n'offre aucune garantie et s'exerce au préjudice des meilleurs.

Des propos séditieux tenus ouvertement par des officiers de tous grades, même en la présence d'étrangers, témoignent du profond mécontentement qui règne dans leur corps.

La triste besogne à laquelle l'armée a été employée dans les deux dernières

années en Arménie, les habitudes d'indiscipline contractées dans les massacres et les pillages, n'ont pas été sans produire leurs funestes effets.

Déjà à Zeitoun, dans le Hauran, et dernièrement à Crète on a vu l'armée régulière tenue en échec partout où une résistance effective a été faite par des bandes d'insurgés.

D'un autre côté, les mutineries dont on a eu l'exemple dans le Yémen, à Moudania, à Uskub, et ailleurs prouvent que la démoralisation a fait des progrès dans les rangs.

Enfin l'attitude des soldats de la garnison même à Constantinople envers les Européens et quelques incidents qui s'y sont produits dernièrement n'est pas faite pour inspirer une confiance absolue si quelque trouble provoqué par le fanatisme ou la misère venait à éclater dans la capitale.

La marine est dans un état d'abandon complet. Faute d'entretien il ne reste rien de l'escadre, créé jadis au prix des plus lourds sacrifices.

L'esprit de sédition est répandu parmi ses officiers plus encore peut-être que chez ceux de l'armée de terre.

État dans les Provinces.

Il existe des désordres administratifs dans les provinces Européennes et Asiatiques de l'Empire.

Liste Civile.

Le domaine de la Liste Civile s'étend constamment, ainsi que les abus qui en dérivent, au détriment du Trésor de l'État.

No. 30.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 6.)
Constantinople, January 6, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1083 of the 24th December, 1896, reporting the publication of a general amnesty for all political prisoners, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an estimate of prisoners already released in the provinces based on the telegraphic reports received from Her Majesty's Consular officers.

I have further the honour to report that at a recent Ambassadors' meeting, M. de Nélidow raised the question of the execution of the amnesty. His Excellency stated that out of the 500 Armenians said to be in prison in the capital, only 123 had as yet been set at liberty, an average of 10 to 12 being liberated each day. The authorities raised all kinds of difficulties; many of the prisoners on their release were compelled to return to their homes in the interior, while others were deported to Tripoli in Barbary. We accordingly drew up the following joint communication, which was presented to the Foreign Minister by the Dragomans of the six Embassies on the 4th instant:—

"Les Représentants des Puissances font observer que la façon dont l'amnestie est appliquée par les autorités Ottomanes, surtout à Constantinople, détruit l'effet de cette mesure de clémence. Sa prompte exécution aurait produit un apaisement général, mais elle est appliquée avec tant de lenteur et de restriction que l'inquiétude qu'elle avait pour but de dissiper continue et s'accroît. Les Représentants des Puissances demandent en conséquence que conformément aux promesses de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, des ordres soient donnés à toutes les autorités pour la mise en liberté immédiate des détenus Arméniens en faveur desquels l'amnistie a été proclamée."

In making the above communication to Tewfik Pasha, the Dragomans pointed out to his Excellency that up to the 30th ultimo only some 100 out of the 500 Armenian prisoners in Constantinople had been released, that some were forced to abandon their work and families here and sent away to their native villages, while in many places in the provinces the local authorities declined, for various reasons, to liberate prisoners.

Tewfik Pasha replied that the Sultan had already given orders about this matter, and said that he hoped that on the following day the Armenians in prison in the capital would all be released.

His Excellency further explained, that to the best of his belief, only those Armenians

who were without means of livelihood and without relations here were to be sent away to the interior; but he promised to refer the question again to the Grand Vizier and the Palace.

On a subsequent occasion his Excellency stated that all the Armenians in the capital had been released, and that the strictest orders had been sent to the provincial authorities for the immediate liberation of all Armenian political prisoners. The Dragomans also drew attention to the advisability of extending the amnesty to the Armenians who had fled from Turkey, and allowing them to return freely. His Excellency replied that the Sultan had already taken this matter into consideration, and that the Council of Ministers was in communication with the Patriarchate on the subject. The Porte, however, feared that such a measure might facilitate the return of the revolutionary agents, but his Excellency expressed the hope that a favourable decision would soon be arrived at, and promised in that case to communicate with the Embassies in writing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 30.

List of Prisoners released.

Angora.—At Angora, 3 Armenians released.
At Caesarea, 26 Armenians released.
At Yuzgat, 5 Armenians released.
All the 57 Mussulmans released, except one at Caesarea.
Adana.—All the Armenian prisoners in the province except two released.
Aleppo.—119 Armenians released.
At Marash, 14 Armenians released.
Alexandretta.—The three Armenians released.
Beirout.—At Acre, six Armenians released. One under sentence of death remains in prison, but his sentence has been commuted.
Instructions demanded as to 10 Armenians imprisoned at Tripoli for murders anterior to the disturbances.
Bitlis.—12 Armenians and 40 Kurds released.
At Moush, 4 Armenians released.
Broussa.—1 Armenian released.
Diarbekir.—4 Armenians released.
20 Mussulmans released.
No political prisoners remain.
At Mardin, 3 Armenians released.
Erzeroum.—228 Armenians released.
No political prisoners remain.
Jerusalem.—Exiled Patriarch and Prelates not pardoned yet.
Kharput.—All recent political prisoners released except those under death sentence.
Sivas.—24 Armenians released.
Trebizond.—14 Armenians released.
At Samsoun, 5 Armenians released.
Van.—21 Armenians and 4 Mussulmans released.

No. 31.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)
Constantinople, January 6, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE already reported to your Lordship by telegraph the account given by M. Nélidow of his audience with the Sultan on the 20th December. It was, however, hinted in some quarters that the language actually used on this occasion was less formidable than the version communicated to the Ambassadors, and the Palace officials freely asserted that His Imperial Majesty had been in the highest spirits after the interview, and was no longer apprehensive of the intentions of Russia.

On the 23rd, however, the Russian Embassy sent to the Porte a notice or *pro-memorid* to the following effect:—

"L'Ambassade de Russie a été chargée de déclarer au nom de Sa Majesté l'Empereur et dans la forme la plus catégorique que Sa Majesté le Sultan s'expose aux plus grands dangers, voir même à une intervention étrangère, si elle ne s'empresse pas de suivre les suggestions amicales que seront dans le cas de lui donner dans son propre intérêt les Représentants des Grandes Puissances dans le but d'améliorer l'administration et de maintenir l'ordre dans l'Empire ainsi que d'assurer à l'Europe les bienfaits de la paix."

It is natural to suppose that this document was composed with a view of contradicting the statements current as to M. Nédilow's language. It was dated, however, the 7th (19th) December, that is, the day before the audience, though only delivered four days later.

Another attempt to mislead the public as to the attitude of the Russian Ambassador was made by the official publication of his name as having been present at the Selamlik on the 1st January.

M. de Nélidow caused a contradiction of the statement to be published in the local press.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 32.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 8. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January 6, 1897.*

I HAVE long been urging on my colleagues the importance of putting a stop to the irregular messages which have hitherto passed between the Embassies and the Palace, and of insisting that all communications should be made through the medium of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

By accepting the Imperial Secretaries as the intermediaries for transacting business, the Embassies have practically assisted the Sultan in the work of destroying the authority of the Porte, and concentrating all power in his hands and those of a few irresponsible favourites. It is generally admitted that this excessive centralization is the root of all the worst evils of the present situation. Moreover, by making verbal communications to Izzet Bey, the Embassies put it in the power of that unscrupulous intriguer to palm off upon the Sultan any invention of his own as the language of an Ambassador, and to sow suspicion between the Representatives by misstatements as to the attitude of their colleagues.

At yesterday's meeting it was decided to adopt my suggestion, and an agreement was come to that communications on the matters now under discussion or on general political subjects should pass exclusively through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I had an opportunity of at once putting this resolution into practice, as I found on returning home that Mr. Block, my First Dragoman, had been summoned to the Palace, and instructed by Tahsin Bey, the Sultan's First Secretary, with a long message to me from His Imperial Majesty, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith. I immediately drafted a reply, to be sent by Mr. Block to Tahsin Bey, asking that the Imperial message might be sent through the Foreign Minister, as, in consequence of an understanding with my colleagues, I was unable to receive any communications respecting reforms or other political questions except through the regular official channel. I submitted this draft to the other Ambassadors in a letter explaining the circumstances, and after it had received their approval, Mr. Block sent a reply accordingly to Tahsin Bey.

Copies of this correspondence are inclosed herewith.

The result of my action was that on the following day Tewfik Pasha called at the Embassy and delivered to me much the same message as that already sent through Tahsin Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Report by Mr. Block to Sir P. Currie.

TAHSIN BEY communicated to me a message from the Sultan to your Excellency to the following effect:—

His Majesty's anxiety to see the reforms executed in their entirety was well-known; he had not ceased to press his authorities to leave nothing undone in that direction. He learned now from the Porte and the Governor-General in the provinces that very little remained to be done. For instance, there might still be a few Christian gendarmes to be appointed, but if there was anything required to complete the reforms it would be attended to immediately, and His Majesty would be most happy to learn from you if your Consuls had any observations to make with regard to the non-completion of any of the reforms.

The Sultan had learned that I had on several occasions stated that good officials should be appointed, and that without them the reforms would remain a dead letter. His Majesty desired above all things that the greatest care should be exercised in the appointment of officials, and to this end he had now appointed a Commission under the presidency of Zihni Pasha, who was in every way an upright and high-minded official, which would be charged with the appointment of officials. The five or six members of the Commission would be men of equally high standing and character as Zihni himself; they would be independent men without prejudices or "attaches," and in order to insure their absolute impartiality they would have to present themselves to His Majesty and before the Caliph, and in the presence of the Sheik-ul-Islam, the Grand Vizier, the Minister of the Interior, and the President of the Council of State, they would be made to swear faithfully to perform their duties, which would be laid down in a special Règlement and issued forthwith. They will be intrusted with the choice of officials, and will exercise a serious control over all; the reports of the financial and civil Inspectors will be submitted to them, and it will be their duty to see that the suggestions of the former are carefully executed.

His Majesty is desirous that the finances should be placed on a sound basis. A Budget which has been drawn up under his supervision shows a surplus of £ T. 15,000 per annum. In addition, His Majesty has abandoned to the State 10 per cent. of his Civil List, amounting to £ T. 60,000.

In order that this Budget should be closely watched and the balance assured, he has appointed Serfik Pasha, late Minister of Public Works, a highly capable official, to preside over the Cour des Comptes.

Still further to insure economy the Redifs have now all been disbanded, and military and other expenditure will be cut down in every way. His Majesty had already given orders that all persons in prison without trial should be forthwith tried, and, if acquitted, liberated immediately. This had been done and now His Majesty had granted a general amnesty to all those implicated in the recent disturbances.

In order to prevent the recurrence of disorders measures were being taken to improve the administration of the police: the worthless officers and men would be dismissed and replaced by others, and the strictest instructions had been given for the maintenance of order and tranquillity.

The reforms for the six provinces had been extended to the rest of the Empire. Judicial Inspectors, Moslem and Christian, had been appointed, as well as Christian Muavins for the Valis.

His Majesty had distributed large sums of money and a great quantity of grain among the destitute Armenians, and permission had been given them to cut wood in the State forests for rebuilding their churches, &c.

Thus His Majesty had taken all the measures necessary for the welfare of the Empire and the amelioration of the Administration.

His Majesty had heard that Lord Salisbury had made a proposal to the Powers that the Embassies of the Six Powers should make certain suggestions with regard to Turkey. His Majesty had, however, that day received a telegram from the Ottoman Ambassador in London, stating that no such proposal had been made. This had given him immense satisfaction. In fact, now that there was such distinct proof that everything necessary had been done there was no need for any conferences of Ambassadors to make proposals with regard to reforms.

His Majesty expressed his surprise that at this moment the Representative of England, the ancient ally and friend of his Empire, should refrain from "coming to the Palace," and he desired that your Excellency should not "stay away."

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Sir P. Currie to the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

Constantinople, le 24 Décembre, 1896.

Mon cher Collègue,

EN rentrant j'ai trouvé Mr. Block, qui avait été appelé au Palais et chargé par le Premier Secrétaire d'une longue communication concernant les réformes, les nouvelles Commissions, &c.

Izzet Bey, qui est entré chez le Premier Secrétaire, a soufflé à l'oreille de Mr. Block, "qu'il fallait à tout prix empêcher la réunion des Ambassadeurs."

Voici la réponse que je propose faire envoyer à Tahsin Bey et que je soumets d'avance à l'approbation de mes collègues.

Votre dévoué,
(Signé) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 32.

Mr. Block to Tahsin Bey.

Le 24 Décembre, 1896.

Monsieur,

JE viens d'informer l'Ambassadeur que j'étais chargé par vous de lui communiquer un message de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Son Excellence me charge de vous prier de lui faire parvenir cette communication par l'entremise du Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. A la suite d'une entente avec ses collègues il lui est impossible dans les circonstances actuelles de recevoir aucune communication au sujet des réformes ou autres questions politiques autrement que par le canal officiel.

(Signé) A. BLOCK.

No. 33.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 11. Confidential.)

Constantinople, January 7, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a letter which has been addressed to the Ambassadors by persons describing themselves as Mussulman functionaries, military, religious, and civil. I also inclose a copy of a paper which has been communicated to me by a high Christian official, and which purports to have been written by an ex-Grand Vizier, giving his views of the present situation in Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 33.

Letter addressed by some Mussulman Functionaries to Sir P. Currie.

Stamboul, le 24 Rédjib, 1314 (29 *Décembre*, 1896).

M. l'Ambassadeur,

SOUCIEUX de faire connaître aux Représentants des Grandes Puissances les vrais sentiments de l'Islam à Constantinople, nous avons l'honneur de vous présenter les réflexions que nous suggère l'amnistie que les instances du Corps Diplomatique viennent d'arracher du Sultan.

Nous avons déjà en maintes circonstances prouvé nos sympathies pour nos compatriotes Chrétiens et exprimé l'indignation que nous faisaient éprouver les persécutions infligées aux Arméniens par notre indigne Gouvernement. Nous ne pouvions donc qu'approuver en principe l'adoption d'une mesure devant sauver des tortures de nos prisons un grand nombre d'Ottomans injustement arrêtés.

Mais, les conditions dans lesquelles s'opère cette prétendue amnistie générale ne peuvent que nous révolter.

Nous ferons d'abord remarquer que le nombre des Arméniens relâchés est absolument dérisoire, comparé à celui que donne la masse des prisonniers de cette même catégorie.

Nous devons encore constater que le Sultan a saisi cette occasion pour rendre la liberté à quelques assassins qui s'étaient particulièrement distingués au cours des derniers massacres et dont MM. les Ambassadeurs n'avaient qu'à grand'peine obtenu l'incarcération.

Il n'échappe d'ailleurs à personne que si Abdul Hamid a cédé aux instances du Corps Diplomatique en accordant cette fameuse amnistie ce n'a été au fond que pour pouvoir procéder tout de suite à l'élargissement des égorgeurs ayant opéré sur ses ordres.

Enfin, pendant que le Sultan fait dans la presse locale et dans les organes à ses gages de la presse étrangère célébrer sa clémence, il multiplie ici les arrestations des Musulmans.

Des Ulémas, des Cheikhs, des officiers de tous grades, des fonctionnaires de toutes les Administrations, des élèves de nos écoles militaires, des particuliers sont arrêtés en masse.

On peut sans exaggération dire que la désolation règne dans des milliers de familles ensuite de ces proscriptions toujours plus nombreuses.

Qu'ont fait ces proscrits?

Quelques-uns n'ont pu s'empêcher de critiquer avec une certaine liberté la conduite du Souverain qui, par une voie sanglante, conduit le pays à sa fin.

Les autres ont été simplement signalés par la police comme professant des opinions défavorables au Gouvernement.

Tels sont les crimes qui ont tout dernièrement donné lieu à l'expédition de deux convois de déportés, qui ont motivé l'arrestation de centaines de personnes actuellement parquées dans les prisons de Yildiz et dans leurs succursales.

Voilà l'amnistie!

Quant aux réformes, votre Excellence sait bien que le Sultan n'en veut aucune, que toutes ses promesses sont données avec la ferme intention de ne les point tenir.

Tout le monde connaît aujourd'hui la vraie mission de Saadeddin Pacha, chargé par le Sultan d'empêcher en Crète toutes les améliorations à l'accomplissement desquelles ce dernier s'était engagé vis-à-vis de l'Europe.

Et la diplomatie Européenne peut d'autant nous arguer d'ignorance à cet égard que c'est elle qui a chassé de l'île cet agent de désordres.

Personne parmi les Ambassadeurs ne prendra au sérieux cette nouvelle Commission qui, sous la présidence de Zihni Pacha, est censée devoir procéder à l'épuration du personnel administratif. Zihni Pacha, s'il n'est pas le plus honnête des fonctionnaires, est dans tous les cas un des plus timides. Tout l'esprit d'initiative, tout sentiment d'indépendance lui sont étrangers. C'est pour cela que le Sultan l'a choisi et il ne fera rien sans ordres de ce dernier. Donc, le Sultan lui-même nommera, changera, ou destituera les fonctionnaires tout comme il l'a fait jusqu'ici.

Nous ne ferons pas à votre Excellence l'injure de supposer qu'elle n'a pas été choquée en prenant connaissance de la ridicule élucubration dans laquelle le Ministre du Commerce, Mahmoud Jellaleddin Pacha, décide l'équilibre du Budget.

Cette audacieuse ineptie est une des plus extraordinaires que le Sultan ait encore osé sanctionner jusqu'ici.

Il défie par là les Gouvernements Européens, auxquels il entend déclarer n'avoir nul besoin de leur concours financier; il défie en même temps le bon sens de ses sujets, qui savent bien que grâce à lui le pays touche à la banqueroute.

L'annonce des soi-disant sacrifices que s'imposera la Liste Civile ne constitue qu'une odieuse ironie.

Qui ignore ici que le Sultan n'a nul besoin de sa Liste Civile puisqu'il dispose à son gré de tous les revenus de l'État?

Dans la lettre ouverte que nous avons l'année dernière adressée au Marquis de Salisbury (lettre dont votre Excellence a reçu un exemplaire) nous n'avons été que trop bons prophètes en prédisant la série de malheurs qui allaient encore s'abattre sur la Turquie. Nous avons répété au Premier Ministre Anglais que le Sultan ne céderait jamais aux observations, objurgations, ou instances de l'Europe; que l'action seule pourrait avoir raison de lui.

Et en effet, voilà que pendant plus de dix-huit mois cette fameuse pression

diplomatique qui devait produire des merveilles n'a pu faire dévier Abdul Hamid de la voie fatale dans laquelle il s'est engagée.

La ruine et l'anarchie sont partout dans notre malheureux pays et si ce régime se prolonge encore pendant trois mois, la guerre civile y surgira de toutes parts.

(Quelques Délégués, fonctionnaires Musulmans, Militaires, Religieux, et Civils.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 33.

Brief Description of the present Situation, by a former Turkish Minister.

SULTAN HAMID est né fourbe, hypocrite, cruel, et arbitraire; les moyens qu'il use pour se soutenir sur son trône sont, hélas, l'assassinat, l'empoisonnement, et la torture. Les Ministres actuels ainsi que les favoris du Palais, soit par ambition, soit par intérêt personnel ne font qu'exécuter les ordres bestiaux du Sultan Hamid, qui vient de créer une nouvelle Commission des fonctionnaires dont il tient les ficelles pour réaliser adroitement ses volontés arbitraires. C'est une nouvelle machine exécutrice de son système de concentration de son pouvoir absolu, par conséquent toutes les réformes frauduleusement promises sont apparentes et dérisoires. Exemple le Budget déjà publié présentant un excédent de £T. 81,000 est un moyen frauduleux pour déclarer à l'Europe que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a pas besoin d'argent. Quelle déception! il faut savoir que les frais généraux inscrits dans le Budget doivent être indispensablement payés tandis que l'encaissement des recettes est matériellement impossible de se réaliser; or, à la fin de l'année au lieu d'excédent il y aura un déficit inévitable de plusieurs millions. C'est une mesure Machiavélique du Sultan Hamid pour jeter de la poudre aux yeux de l'Europe.

Quant aux Provinces d'Anatolie, on ne sait pas exactement tout ce qui s'y passe secrètement, excepté de quelques pauvres Monavins Chrétiens. Tous les Gouverneurs, Sous-Gouverneurs, les Moudirs, les Caïmacans sont des Turcs choisi par le Camarilla du Palais ou par le corrompu Loutfi Aga moyennant de grands bakchischs. Vu cet état de choses le pays est au complet désespoir.

Si les Grandes Puissances sont d'accord pour remédier à cette malheureuse situation, il faut absolument commencer par exiger la formation d'un Cabinet honnête, capable, pouvant résister (bien entendu avec le concours des Ambassadeurs) aux volontés arbitraires du Sultan. Autrement tous les conseils, toutes les notes officielles des Ambassadeurs, n'aboutiront jamais à obtenir un résultat réel à moins d'un contrôle efficace et Européen.

No. 34.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 13.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 7, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that in the month of October last Mr. Jones, Acting Consul at Jerusalem, reported that the Russian Embassy had recently applied for the transfer of the real properties purchased by or on behalf of the late Archimandrite Antonin, head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, and now the property of the Russian Palestine Society, to the name of the Russian Government.

The Sublime Porte immediately ordered the local authorities to prepare a list of all the buildings and lands that would thus be placed under the direct protection of the Russian Government.

Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem now telegraphs that orders have been received there from the Sublime Porte to register all the real property of the Russian Palestine Society in the name of the Imperial Russian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 35.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 16.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 7, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the Vali's reply to the Grand Vizirial Circular inviting suggestions as to means of increasing the public revenue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 75.)
Sir, *Trebizond, December 28, 1896.*

THE Grand Vizier's Circular calling upon the provincial authorities to suggest means of increasing the public revenue in order that additional expenditure which the introduction of reforms would entail may be met, was duly received by the Vali Cadri Bey.

His Excellency referring, in reply, to his Reports with plans and estimates of some five years ago, wherein he strongly urged the construction of a harbour at Trebizond, and a railway to Erzeroum, as the best means of developing the resources of the country, observed that the imposition of heavier taxes than now leviable would be, in the present impoverished condition of the inhabitants, an ill-advised policy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 36.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 18.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 7, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1017 of the 9th December, 1896, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the plundering of an Armenian house by Turks at Samaroukza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 74.)
Sir, *Trebizond, December 27, 1896.*

IN connection with my despatch of the 25th ultimo, I have now the honour to report that eight of the ten Turks who had robbed the houses of some Armenians at Samaroukza have been brought down and lodged in prison.

Four other Moslems who had looted Greek houses at Yomura have also been arrested.

The Deputy-Commander of Gendarmerie has now been sent to Surmeneh in search of Sagheroglou Hassan who led the band at Samaroukza, as well as Sovilmez Suleyman Agha, who endeavoured lately to extort £T. 90 out of the Armenian villages of Mahtela, Elemonos, and Altchak Dereh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 37.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 10.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 7, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, respecting tax collection at Morenik. I am bringing Mr. Fontana's statements to the notice of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 64.)
Sir, *Kharput, December 16, 1896.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's telegram of the 28th ultimo, informing me that the Porte had contradicted the statements contained in my telegram of the 30th October last with regard to the number of Christian families at Morenik, the losses they sustained during the disturbances, and the sum demanded from them for taxes; and I beg, as instructed, to submit the following facts in confirmation of the statements in question.

A number of poor Armenians from Morenik came to see me one morning and told me of the losses inflicted upon them by pillage and fire, the amount of taxes they had paid for this year, and the total sum demanded by the zaptiehs, who had come to extort the balance still owing.

I rode to the village the same afternoon and inspected the ruins there; and I came upon two zaptiehs armed with bludgeons who had arrived there that day to act as tax-gatherers. The following day I called upon the Vali and communicated to him the details set forth in my telegram of the date referred to, and I said that if the whole tax demanded were actually extorted from the people, it would simply mean that the bread would be taken out of their mouths. The Vali did not deny any one of the facts I laid before him, and he eventually promised to see that justice was done in the matter.

I also called upon the Commandant and urged him to use his influence with the Vali in the affair, and he agreed with me that a diminution ought to be made in the taxation.

To-day a number of villagers from Morenik again went to the konak with Petitions to be presented to the Vali, in connection with the tax extortion practised upon them. The Murakhass, upon whom I have just called, assures me that over 20,000 piastres have already been collected at Morenik; that the sum of 40,000 piastres in all is demanded and insisted upon, and that the villagers can obtain no diminution thereof.

The Porte, I would submit, if really desirous of knowing the truth as to the manner in which the collection of taxes has been conducted this year in this province, might obtain impartial information from the Protestant and Catholic Missions at Kharput, or from the Catholic Mission at Mezreh; but it is futile for the Turkish Government to base its statements exclusively upon the reports of Turkish officials. The tissue of falsehoods published in the "Ikdam," as a description of the recent massacre at Eghin, and based, it seems upon a Report signed by the Acting Kaïmakam, who himself helped to bring about the disturbance, by the Bin-Bashi, whose troops were foremost in the slaughter of Armenians, and by the Mir-Alai, who arrived at Eghin after the massacre was completed, may serve as a specimen of the mendacious reports so often sent to the Porte by Ottoman officials.

In conclusion, I would add that the Porte is probably far more to blame, as far as concerns the extortion of taxes in Mamuret-ul-Aziz, than the local authorities, who receive, I am told, peremptory orders for money to be sent to Constantinople, and are consequently obliged to raise money at any cost—even at the sacrifice of what sense of justice and humanity they may themselves possess.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 38.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 2. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 5, 1897.*

I WAS not able to pay my first visit to Count Goluchowski before yesterday, his Excellency having been summoned to Galicia on account of the illness of a near relative.

After a short interchange of courtesies, our conversation naturally turned to affairs at Constantinople, Count Goluchowski being so good, in reply to an inquiry I made as to the last intelligence that had reached him from thence, to give me at considerable length his views of the situation.

The meeting of the Ambassadors on the 2nd had not advanced matters much, according to his Excellency. The discussion had chiefly turned on the vague proposals of the Russian Ambassador, brought forward, as it appeared to Count Goluchowski, chiefly with the object of delaying practical discussion. M. Nélidow's latest suggestions bore upon financial questions, on which the only Ambassador who at all supported him was M. Cambon. Count Goluchowski spoke with considerable discouragement of the little progress thus far made.

This being the first opportunity his Excellency had of conversing with me on the questions which so anxiously engage the attention of the Great Powers, he very pardonably went at much length into their genesis and gradual development, and found in me, I trust, an attentive, and certainly an obliged, listener.

Little of what Count Goluchowski said would be sufficiently new to your Lordship to warrant my troubling you with it, but it seems worth recording that, in referring to the proposal made by M. Nélidow at the second meeting, and objected to principally by the Austrian Ambassador, that the condition of the European provinces should first be dealt with, his Excellency expressed his belief that the Russian Ambassador, as well as his Government, was quite "de bonne foi" in desiring to prevent any serious disturbance in those provinces. Count Goluchowski, however, does not apprehend real trouble in that quarter, provided, he says, the Balkanic States who might be tempted to favour an outbreak are checked, as they easily can be, Bulgaria by Russia, Servia by this Empire, and Greece by ourselves.

The real danger, and a most immediate one, in his Excellency's view, is the central one which might arise at Constantinople itself as a result of the misgovernment obtaining there. At any time the security, not of the Armenians alone, but of Christians of all confessions, and even of the foreign Embassies themselves, might be seriously and suddenly imperilled.

As regards the urgency of coming beforehand to some agreement as to the measures by which the recommendations to be made eventually to the Sultan should, if necessary, be enforced, Count Goluchowski's language was fully as decided as it has been for some time past. Nothing, he says, will induce the Imperial Government to expose itself to the indignity of seeing proposals in which it has taken a part set at naught by the Sultan in his assurance that their acceptation will not be compelled. Sooner than accept the certainty of such humiliation, Austria-Hungary would withdraw from the concert of the Powers, and, added his Excellency, with a touch of irony, perhaps then the Sultan, faithful to his customary tactics, might seek to shelter himself behind her.

To sum up the impressions left me by my first interview with the Imperial Foreign Minister, I would say that his language regarding the Sultan was much stronger and more uncompromising than that he used concerning that Sovereign when I saw him in September last, while his remarks on the subject of M. Nélidow betrayed, it seemed to me, an ingrained distrust of Russian action perhaps not surprising in a statesman who, although unquestionably a patriotic Austrian Imperial servant, probably does not forget that he is a Pole. I was further much struck by the Foreign Minister's undisguised pessimism regarding the situation, and in this respect I found his views shared by M. de Kállay, with whom I had some conversation this afternoon.

The Emperor leaving Vienna to-day on a shooting expedition, His Imperial Majesty will be unable to receive me before the 10th at earliest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 39.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 3. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Vienna, January* 6, 1896.

THE Russian Ambassador, an old colleague of mine at the Hague, with whom I am on most friendly terms, came to see me yesterday.

He began by asking me, partly in jest, whether I had brought anything new from London, whence it was hoped that some light might be shed on the situation in the East, and then proceeded to speak of affairs at Constantinople very much in the same strain as Count Goluchowski, as reported by me in a preceding despatch.

Count Kapnist's impression is that no sort of real progress is being made. The Governments of the Great Powers not having been able to come to any practical decisions for remedying the condition of Turkish affairs, have, to his mind, simply shifted the burthen on to their respective Ambassadors, telling them to try and see what they can do, and thus far those Representatives appear to be in the way of not doing anything. Meanwhile, the position at Constantinople itself remains perilous in the extreme. The truce which the Armenian Committees had engaged to keep will expire before long, the Ramadan, on the other hand, being likewise close upon us.

On my offering a remark as to his exclusive mention of danger from the Armenian Committees, Count Kapnist hastened to add that, among the subversive forces to which he referred, he included the young Turks, as also the Softas, and, in short, all the fanatical elements that might at any moment be let loose. Repeating almost exactly the words used to me by Count Goluchowski, my colleague said that he looked upon the situation as involving the safety of the foreign communities and even of the Embassies. And yet nothing was being concerted between the Powers in view of a possible catastrophe of such magnitude. The Sultan himself—whom my colleague freely stigmatized as a cruel coward—took care to be guarded at Yildiz by some 15,000 men, but when once an explosion had been produced, say by an Armenian bomb, or a raid on the banks, or perhaps even an attack on Yildiz—for everything was possible—the great collapse ("effondrement") of which the Powers stood in such dread must take place, while nothing would have been done to meet the cataclysm.

I asked Count Kapnist whether his Government at any rate were not prepared to deal with such an emergency. As far as he knew, he replied, they were quite unprepared.

It is a singular fact that immediately after my colleague had left me I took up the "Correspondance Politique" published here, and there found the article, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, giving, as coming from St. Petersburgh, an optimistic view of the situation at Constantinople in all essential points quite opposed to that so strongly urged by the Russian Ambassador.

This article, which is palpably due to Russian inspiration, and will no doubt attract notice, seems to have for its chief object to defend M. Nédilow from the charge of lukewarmness in his attitude towards the Sultan and the Porte, and may well be supposed to emanate from him. It is, nevertheless, maintained in some well-informed quarters that its origin is to be looked for at the Russian Embassy here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Extract from the "Correspondance Politique."

ON nous écrit de Saint-Pétersbourg 1er Janvier :—

"Les dispositions d'esprit des sphères officielles Russes, naguère assez pessimistes, le sont devenues moins sous l'impression produite par les dernières nouvelles de Constantinople. Les différentes concessions que le Sultan vient de faire telles que l'octroi de l'amnistie aux Arméniens et la réduction des dépenses budgétaires Turques, commencent à inspirer confiance dans la sincérité de ses intentions et à faire même espérer qu'il pourra tenir ses promesses plus aisément qu'on ne l'avait d'abord supposé. Mais en même temps on ne se dissimule pas que cette facilité n'est pourtant que relative et qu'en réalité Abdul Hamid aura d'extrêmes difficultés à surmonter

pour satisfaire aux exigences de l'Europe. Et c'est pourquoi celle-ci doit persévérer dans la fermeté de son attitude actuelle, dans la plénitude surtout de sa communauté d'action, afin de fournir au Sultan lui-même des arguments à opposer aux conseils de résistance qu'il ne manquera pas d'entendre dans son entourage et auxquels il pourra alors imposer silence en invoquant le danger qu'il y aurait pour lui et la Turquie à ne point tenir compte des volontés des Puissances. Ces dernières ne sauraient donc, en aucun cas, renoncer à leur plan de mesures coercitives, car la perspective de la mise à exécution de ces mesures constitue la meilleure garantie de soumission du Gouvernement Turc, mais elles peuvent surseoir à cette exécution aussi longtemps que des circonstances matérielles quelconques ne l'auront pas rendue indispensable, et il est même prudent, sage, opportun d'agir ainsi.

"Le sentiment qui paraît prévaloir en ce moment dans les sphères officielles Russes ressemble fort à la disposition qu'on éprouve à faire crédit à un débiteur lorsqu'il manifeste sa bonne volonté de payer et demande seulement du temps et des facilités pour remplir ses engagements. Cette comparaison explique assez justement l'attitude prise vis-à-vis du Sultan par M. de Nélidow depuis son retour à Constantinople, où, ne rencontrant jusqu'à présent que des actes de soumission de la part du Gouvernement Turc, il ne saurait raisonnablement se montrer intransigeant.

"Certains journaux étrangers ont donc grand tort de s'indiquer des rapports modérés entretenus ces jours derniers par l'Ambassadeur de Russie avec le Sultan et la Porte, de même que plusieurs journaux Russes feraient bien de témoigner plus d'aménité dans leur langage, les sorties menaçantes ne concordant nullement, avec les sentiments modérés, les vues prudentes et les dispositions pacifiques du Gouvernement Russe. Celui-ci veut sincèrement le rétablissement d'un ordre de choses normal dans l'Empire Ottoman, il prétend y garantir la sécurité et le bien-être des populations Chrétiennes, mais il désire en même temps aboutir, si c'est possible, à ces résultats sans s'écarter des voies pacifiques.

"Quelques journaux ont l'air de représenter M. de Nélidow comme reparti de Saint-Pétersbourg pour aller régler la question des Détroits de Constantinople, tandis qu'en réalité le règlement de cette question ne constitue pas le but direct de sa mission, mais peut tout simplement résulter de la tournure ultérieure des événements.

"Si le Gouvernement Turc donne satisfaction aux légitimes exigences de l'Europe, il n'y aura point lieu de soulever la question des Détroits et toutes les Puissances, y compris la Russie, s'en abstiendront; mais si, au contraire, on est obligé de recourir à l'emploi de mesures coercitives, qui nécessiteront l'apparition des escadres Européennes devant la capitale Ottomane, il faudra bien aviser alors au règlement de la question des Détroits, et la Russie prétendra naturellement qu'il s'effectue dans des conditions capables de garantir la sécurité de sa flotte et de ses ports de la Mer Noire, qui se trouverait constamment menacée si les flottes d'autres pays acquéraient libre accès dans cette mer. Mais en agitant prématurément des questions aussi brûlantes, on ne fait que risquer de produire mal à propos de l'irritation dans les esprits et même de compromettre la solidité de l'entente commune des Puissances Européennes."

No. 40.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 6.)

My Lord, *Vienna, January* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a précis, for which I am indebted to Mr. Rennie, of an article which appeared recently in the "Neue Freie Presse" on the subject of the relations between Russia and Turkey.

This contribution to the polemics of the day on Eastern affairs professes to give the opinions of a diplomatist of high rank fully conversant with the policy and designs of Russia regarding the Ottoman Empire. In some quarters here it has been held to come really from Friedrichsruhe, and to be the latest of the attempts made systematically from thence to sow dissension and distrust amongst the Powers. However this may be, it has fallen very flat, and remained, as far as I know, relatively unnoticed.

Certain passages in this elucubration bearing upon the attitude in given eventualities towards ourselves of the two Powers accounted to be most friendly to us deserve, nevertheless, a passing notice. The shadowy diplomatist imagined by the writer for his own purposes holds that, in the event of the Russians making a successful dash at Constanti-

nople—which, he says, they are prepared to do at the first favourable opportunity, at the same time "offering" the Sultan a Treaty of Guarantee—it is most improbable that we should declare war against Russia, and that in no case could we reckon on the military support of Austria or Italy. Whatever general similitude may exist between Austrian and British views on Eastern affairs might well, he further holds, be paralyzed at a given moment by an agreement between Russia and Austria "in the direction of Salonica" on the pattern of the Reichstadt compact regarding Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

If I may permit myself to offer an opinion at so early a stage of the mission confided to me here, I would say that such an arrangement as is indicated would be only resorted to here on a clear—I would almost say despairing—conviction that there is no relying on the effectual co-operation of Great Britain on the most vital points of the Eastern question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

Inclosure in No. 40

Précis of Letter in the "Neue Freie Presse" of December 31, 1896, reporting a Conversation with a "leading Diplomatist."

IT is difficult to understand how the European press, which has so often been deceived on similar occasions, can in this case express such a firm belief in the reform scheme being carried out under Russia's directions, for it is clear that neither Russia nor Turkey have any real interest in the question, as both are better off as things stand.

As regards Turkey, people do not sufficiently take into account the Sultan's susceptibilities as an independent Sovereign and his apparent readiness to meet the wishes of the Powers is merely due to the fact that he is certain that nothing will be done. It is my opinion that M. de Nélidow has brought with him no instructions which may mislead the Sultan into accepting any scheme of reform. As it is, Russia has Turkey completely "in her pocket," but it is doubtful whether this would be equally the case if Turkey were placed under a European control of a financial or political nature. Russia would therefore be acting in opposition to her own interests if she took seriously in hand the reform scheme; and, while for political reasons it may be necessary to make a show of acting in unison with the other European Powers, she secretly endeavours to remove any effect that that action may produce, and, moreover, she is assisted in her scheme to deceive Europe by the very nature of Turkish policy.

There is, too, a general mistrust of British and other schemes of intervention, as it is an open secret that, while acting ostensibly in the cause of humanity or Treaty rights, all the other Powers will look after their own interests, while Russia, on the other hand, is in the position of the *beatus possidens*.

The other Powers can accomplish nothing at the Porte without the consent of Russia, while Russia, if not able to carry out her wishes in direct opposition to the rest of Europe, can at least do so without asking their permission. There is nothing in the events of the last few months, least of all in her dealings with France, which does not convince me that, when the fitting moment has arrived, Russia will land troops on the Bosphorus, will offer the Sultan a suitable Treaty of Guarantee, and then, having waited to see what England will do in the face of this "fait accompli," will devote all her energies towards realizing her plans in Eastern Asia. It is highly improbable that England will declare war, as she is no longer in a position to do so alone, and would receive military assistance from neither Austria-Hungary nor Italy. It is true, indeed, that the tendency of both Austrian and English policy in the East is to oppose Russia, but an arrangement, sanctioned by Russia, permitting Austria to expand in the direction of Salonica, would prevent that policy from having any practical results.

In spite of denials to the contrary, Italy has made a Convention with Russia by which, in return for Russian good offices at Paris, she agrees not to move if Russia enters Constantinople. Turkey, on the other hand, will not seriously undertake to carry through the reforms, both on account of susceptibilities respecting its sovereign rights as well as owing to difficulties which must arise in case of foreign interference in an Empire like the Sultan's; for it is highly probable that, by attempting seriously to carry out the reform scheme, the Porte would not only undermine its authority over its own subjects, but would also stir up the latent hatred of the Mussulman against the Christian population, an eventuality which has been taken into account far too little by the press.

As regards the future, much depends upon individuals and circumstances as well as upon the real decisions of the Sultan, which, in their turn, depend upon how far His Majesty considers himself sufficiently backed up by Russia to face Europe in concert, which is always an unreliable factor. But even if obtained under Russian pressure, the Sultan's decisions offer no real guarantee, for in his precarious situation one must always reckon with the possibility that, in a moment of caprice, His Majesty may one day destroy the whole fabric which he has been forced to erect.

No. 41.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January* 8, 1897.

DURING a visit paid me by Count Goluchowski the other day, his Excellency told me in confidence that he had quite recently been placed in possession of an original document, directly emanating from the Sultan, in the shape of an instruction for his guidance to the Grand Vizier, charging him to give such and such assurances to the foreign Ambassadors, while at the same time carefully guarding against acting on those assurances.

Count Goluchowski, in narrating this to me, quoted in part the Eastern phraseology of the Imperial paper, and observed that it was the first time he had had the chance of seeing "in black and white" so interesting a proof of the duplicity of Abdul Hamid.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 42.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 11.)

(No. 10. Confidential.)
My Lord; *Berlin, January* 8, 1897.

IN my interview with Baron von Rotenhan this morning, the conversation turned upon the attempts made by the Ambassadors at Constantinople to draw up a scheme of reforms for the Turkish Empire.

His Excellency said that the meetings of the Ambassadors were being held, and had, at all events, produced one good result, namely, that the Sultan had become thoroughly alarmed, and seemed at last to be convinced that the European concert was a reality, and that it would no longer be possible to play off one Power against another.

On my asking whether he shared the fears which I had heard expressed of the Armenian Committees recommencing their agitation, as, it had appeared, they had threatened to do if the Great Powers failed to introduce reforms before the month of February, Baron von Rotenhan replied that he believed the Sultan was quite capable of maintaining order at Constantinople, and was now in such terror of the Powers that he would probably do so, and, indeed, accept any proposals which the Ambassadors might submit to him.

With regard to the danger of a rising in Macedonia, Baron von Rotenhan said that he understood that the want of money would probably prevent any serious disturbance, which certainly would be discouraged by all the Great Powers. The formation of a camp in Greece, although nominally intended for the purpose of increasing the discipline in the Greek army, might perhaps encourage the Greeks in Macedonia to attempt a rising in the belief that the Greek army would come to their assistance. His Excellency said that it was difficult to understand where the money necessary for the formation of such a camp was to be found, unless it was true, as had been stated, that the Greek Government possessed a secret fund of several millions of marks, the existence of which they carefully concealed from their creditors.

Baron von Rotenhan added that the Turkish Government had just made an appeal to the Great Powers, which had no doubt already been received by your Lordship, to settle the amount of the debt which should be borne by the Balkan States and the amount of tribute which they should be called upon to pay. His Excellency said that this appeal

had been forwarded to the German Ambassador at Constantinople for his observations, and that his private opinion was, that as the Powers were pressing the Sultan to fulfil his obligations towards his creditors, it was only fair that they should assist him to obtain the means of doing so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 43.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 13. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Paris, January* 10, 1897.

M. HANOTAUX told me this morning, on his return from Hyères, that he had not received any news of importance by his last messenger from Constantinople. He had in fact written to M. Cambon recently to say that he did not want to be overwhelmed with long reports of the discussions; that he had full confidence in the capacity of the Ambassador of the Republic to deal with the various questions under debate; and that he was content to wait, without interference on his own part, until the moment when the six Ambassadors sent in their unanimous report.

Meantime the maintenance of the accord between those Representatives was undoubtedly exercising a most salutary influence on the Sultan; but entirely as he recognized this, M. Hanotaux would not have me believe that the prospect of reforming the Ottoman Administration appeared to him to be a whit more favourable than before. Something may indeed be done which will suffice to keep the machine at work; but the complete repair of all its component parts is impossible.

M. Hanotaux observed, further, that he considered that he had been fortunate in obtaining the assent of Russia to the three reservations set forth in his telegram to M. Cambon of the 17th ultimo, as communicated to your Lordship by the Baron de Courcel; but that in his opinion the most important element in any scheme which the Ambassadors should present would be the application of its provisions to all the subjects of the Sultan alike without distinction of creed. The question now before the Ambassadors had greatly widened. It is no longer the affair of so many thousand Armenians, whose lives and property are or may be in danger. It has become a discussion on the means of improving if possible the position, and of attempting to secure the well-being of the Mussulmans equally with the Christians. This point must be kept steadily in view, or the fanaticism of the former will be aroused, and the worst consequences will ensue.

His Excellency stated it as his opinion that the original action of the three Powers was doomed from the beginning to failure from this inherent defect. No consideration had been paid to the susceptibility of the Mussulman portion of the population. The danger that might result from this indifference must, his Excellency thought, have made itself perceptible to Her Majesty's Government in the effect perhaps already produced on the minds of the Queen's Mussulman subjects. It had certainly done so in regard to those of France, who, while not nearly so numerous as Her Majesty's, were quite important enough to necessitate the most cautious treatment, and consideration at the hands of the Government of the Republic.

While hoping, therefore, that the continual harmony of the Powers would secure the desired end, M. Hanotaux did not conceal from himself that the very dimensions which the question has now assumed inspire him with apprehension. He had all along felt this; and although yielding to no one in his compassion for the sufferings of the Armenian Christians, he had at the very outset feared that in taking up their cause the three Powers might be opening the door to the admission of possibilities of wide-spreading importance, which might well have raised hesitation.

He would not refrain, in speaking with me, from laying the greatest stress on the urgency of keeping the public in England calm upon the question of Ottoman reform. There has been no slight danger in France that enthusiasm in the cause of humanity would place obstacles in the way of that conservative and unimpassioned policy which the Government see that it is essential to pursue. He believed the danger to be greater in England, where the Armenian Committees receive countenance from the most influential quarters.

I said that I had already on a former occasion pointed out to him that the popular effervescence on this question had been greatly over-estimated, and that the sensible well-balanced language of moderate and reflecting politicians of all parties had calmed whatever excitement had been raised. And I asked his Excellency whether he had not observed that the most recent denunciation of the Sultan by a voice generally so potent to raise a storm, had fallen absolutely flat on the ears of the British public.

M. Hanotaux said that he had noticed this, and had been much struck by it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 44.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 8. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 11, 1897, 10·55 P.M.

THE following is the substance of a telegram which, M. Panza informs me, was sent to Rome by the Italian Ambassador at St. Petersburgh :—

M. de Nélidow proposed at a Council, specially summoned during his stay at St. Petersburgh, the eventual occupation of Constantinople by Russian troops, and M. Shishkin supported this proposal, which, however, was rejected by a narrow majority, including M. Pobiedmostzeff and M. Witte.

No. 45.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 11.)

(No. 2. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Vienna, January* 11, 1897.

I HAD the honour this morning to present my credentials to the Emperor, when nothing could have been more gracious than the way in which His Majesty received me.

The Emperor, having first expressed his special regard for Her Majesty the Queen, and having inquired particularly after Her Majesty's health, at once turned the conversation to Eastern affairs, saying that I entered upon my mission at Vienna at a time of exceptional anxiety, and laying great stress upon the gravity of the situation. His Majesty did not take a sanguine view of the ultimate result of the Ambassadorial Conferences at Constantinople, but emphasized his hope that the Government of Her Majesty and that of Austria-Hungary would continue to act cordially together in these questions.

His Majesty allowed me to see that he distrusted M. Nélidow, although I was able to say that Sir Philip Currie had privately informed me that he believed that the Russian Ambassador was personally anxious that a settlement should be arrived at.

No. 46.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 10. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 13, 1897, 3 P.M.

M. NÉLIDOW communicated a telegram from his Government yesterday at our meeting, stating that information had been received from Paris by the French Ambassador at St. Petersburgh to the effect that the Armenians intended to make a fresh attempt on the 18th instant. The day is especially favourable, as it is the date of the Epiphany, which is the great Armenian festival, as well as that of the departure of the caravan for Mecca.

We have agreed as to measures to be taken for the protection of foreigners, and we have arranged to warn the Turkish Government indirectly that it would be desirable to take special precautions.

No. 47.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 13.)

(No. 11.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 13, 1897, 10 P.M.*

MARSHAL FUAD PASHA, who has openly expressed his dissatisfaction with the present régime, was appointed yesterday Commander of the 6th Army Corps at Bagdad, and ordered to proceed to his post in forty-eight hours. He has refused to obey, as he considers this order as equivalent to exile or sentence of death.

He has asked for the intervention of the foreign Representatives, and has forwarded them a copy of a letter he has addressed to the Minister of War.

No. 48.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 14, 1897.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 6 of the 6th instant, reporting the action taken by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers with regard to the delay in giving effect to the amnesty for all political prisoners.

The course followed by your Excellency in dealing with this matter is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 49.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 14, 1897.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 8 of the 6th instant, reporting the agreement arrived at, on your suggestion, by the Ambassadors of the Powers, that they shall insist that all communications with the Turkish Government on the matters now under discussion between them or on general political subjects should pass exclusively through the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Your Excellency's action in this matter is entirely approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 50.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 12. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 15, 1897, 11 A.M.*

YESTERDAY the financial question was discussed at the Ambassadors' meeting.

We considered alternative proposals for European Under-Secretary and Mixed Commission. The Ambassadors were in favour of conciliating Ottoman public opinion by making provision for the payment of arrears of civil and military salaries.

The plan originally advocated by M. de Nélidow, with some modifications, seemed to meet with the most favour, but time was asked to examine its details. The following is the draft:—

"Former une Commission Mixte Permanente composée de membres Ottomans et de Délégués Européens en nombre égal, ces derniers désignés ou agréés par les Puissances pour étudier la situation financière de la Turquie; dresser un budget sérieux et en surveiller et contrôler l'exécution. Cette Commission aurait avant tout à établir le montant des arriérés, après quoi les Puissances seraient disposées à faciliter à la Porte les moyens de les régler en liquidant d'abord les appointements dus aux fonctionnaires civils et militaires et en surveillant ce règlement."

No. 51.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 15.)

(No. 13.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 15, 1897, 3 P.M.*

ORDERS have been issued by the Porte for the formation of a Financial Commission consisting of two Turks and two foreigners.

The Sultan has also given orders to the Porte to instruct the Ottoman Representatives in Switzerland and Belgium to apply to the Governments of those countries for four officers. They are to be of the rank of Colonel, and to be employed by the Turkish Government as Inspectors of Gendarmerie in the capital and the provinces.

No. 52.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, January 15, 1897.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 12 of to-day, reporting that, at the Ambassadors' meeting on the 14th instant, proposals were discussed for the appointment of a Mixed Commission to deal with the financial situation in Turkey.

I request that your Excellency will be careful not to use any words by which the impression might be conveyed that financial assistance of any sort would be forthcoming from this country. It would not be possible to obtain Parliamentary sanction for assistance of this nature.

No. 53.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—Received January 16.)

(No. 14. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 16, 1897, noon.*

DRAFT recommendations were prepared at the Ambassadors' meeting yesterday on the following points:—

1. Reorganization of the police under the direction of foreign specialists.

2. The re-establishment of a mixed Municipality at Pera in agreement with the foreign Representatives, and a similar system to be progressively extended to all parts of the capital and to other towns of the Empire.

The deliberations of the Municipalities are to be public. They will have the local police under their orders, and they will prepare their own Budget.

3. The Press Law to be revised and rendered less stringent.

The European Commissions for the provinces will be discussed at our meeting on Monday next.

No. 54.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 16.)

(No. 15. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January* 16, 1897, 12·30 P.M.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 4 of the 15th January.

The following are M. Nélidow's ideas as to financial assistance to Turkey:—

200,000*l.* a-year which is now applied by the Council of the Debt to the sinking fund and reserve should be surrendered in order to give interest for a new loan which would be guaranteed by the Powers and administered under their supervision.

Neither my colleagues nor myself have expressed any opinion on this suggestion, though I imagine it is approved by the French Ambassador.

What view would Her Majesty's Government take of such a guarantee of the Powers as that suggested above, if payment of interest through the Public Debt were satisfactorily secured?

The consent of the Public Debt was to be obtained, according to M. Nélidow's plan, by giving them compensating advantages in connection with the issue of the loan.

I shall be most careful to agree to no recommendation implying financial assistance from England.

No. 55.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 16, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1093 of the 30th ultimo, and have learned with satisfaction that, in accordance with the suggestion made by Mr. Fitzmaurice and recommended to the Porte by your Excellency, rewards have been conferred on the Kaïmakam of Birejik and others, through whose exertions many lives were saved during the massacre in that town.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 56.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 19 A.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 8, 1897.

TO-DAY'S Turkish papers publish an official notification to the effect that the period during which Armenians who have gone to Europe and elsewhere may return is still further extended for a period of seventy-five days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 57.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 21.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting the dispatch of prisoners last week to Beirout, in connection with the recent outbreaks in the Hauran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 52.)
Sir, *Damascus, December* 28, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that last week seventeen Druses, amongst whom are three or four leaders, together with 211 women and children, were dispatched to Beirout.

These persons are considered to be those who were partisans of the Government (notably a certain Ibrahim Radamani, and Hamad Rassim-el-Atrash), and the action of the Government in exiling these persons is looked upon as most treacherous.

The situation in the Hauran remains as previously reported. There are about 6,000 Druses still under arms in the Ledja and Es-Safa, but the troops are masters of the Jebel proper.

Lately the troops attacked Ahiry and Nejran, and took prisoners many of the inhabitants.

In the Hermon district the authorities have succeeded in levying conscripts from the Druses at Hasbeya; but at Rasheya they failed, as the men liable for military service fled *en masse* to the Lebanon. The Government has imprisoned at Hasbeya the Druse Sheikh Hamid Kais (one of the principal Akhals, and a man of great eminence among the Druses) for having connived at his nephew's flight to America.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 58.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 22.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the disbanding of Redifs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 53.)
Sir, *Damascus, December* 28, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that all the Redif battalions hitherto under arms in this district have been disbanded, and that they have commenced to return to their homes.

I am not able to ascertain the exact number of the battalions thus released from service; but, according to information previously in my hands, it should amount to eighteen in all.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 59.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 23.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1077 of the 24th December last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Vice-Consul at Broussa, confirming the report of the revolt of a Turkish regiment at Moudania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 59.

Vice-Consul Gilbertson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Broussa, January* 4, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 26th ultimo asking me to inform you whether the report respecting the revolt of a regiment at Moudania had been confirmed, and, if so, to furnish your Excellency with any further particulars on the subject.

Having personally investigated the case—at Moudania—I beg to confirm my previous statements, and subjoin the following further particulars in connection therewith:—

That the vessel was the steam-ship "Adana," and the men she had on board numbered 1,200. These, it appears, openly showed their displeasure at having to embark and face the inclement weather in their old, light, and ragged uniforms, and this their dissatisfaction was duly reported to head-quarters. Knowing these facts, the Turkish Government decided that the troops should not disembark at Constantinople, as it feared that their wretched condition and mood would cause a very bad impression in the capital, and for these reasons it not only ordered the "Adana" to Moudania, but instructed the authorities here to pay the men on their arrival in that port. Of the 1,200 men, 20 disembarked at Moudania, 180 were transhipped to the Mahsoussé ship "Marmora," which was sent expressly from Constantinople to convey them to Ismidt, and the remainder left the "Adana" direct for Heraclea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ED. GILBERTSON.

No. 60.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 25.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 11, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1090 of the 30th December last, reporting the departure of the Hamidieh cavalry from Constantinople, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Minister of War, in the course of a conversation with Colonel Ponsonby, Military Attaché to this Embassy, made the following statement on the subject:—

'The return of the Hamidieh to their homes was due, he said, solely to the saving of expense effected thereby. He hoped in the early summer to be able to bring another regiment of them to Constantinople. His Excellency explained that the object of bringing them here was that their Kurdish peculiarities of character might be tamed and "softened" by being brought into contact with the civilizing influences of the capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 61.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 13, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 6 of the 6th instant respecting the execution of the general amnesty, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Minister for Foreign Affairs has stated to Mr. Block that Turks who are in prison under sentence of death will be treated exactly as Armenians similarly situated will be.

His Excellency, however, volunteered the information that he only knew of one Turk condemned to death. Turks guilty of murder who have not been condemned to death but only to long terms of imprisonment are released in virtue of the amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 62.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 33.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 12, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. Seager, an English merchant here, thanking me for the release of two of his Armenian employés.

I beg to draw your Lordship's attention to the men's statements respecting the tortures inflicted on them in prison.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 62.

Mr. M. Seager to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Constantinople, January* 5, 1897.

I AM glad to be able to inform your Excellency that all my men have been released, and it is a perfect wonder to me that two of them, namely, Boghos Curian and Agagian Terzian, have not died under the cruel treatment they have undergone. The former was tortured in order to be made to swear that Mr. Chambers, of Bagchejik, was an active member of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee; and the latter, to declare that he had fired a pistol in my warehouse at Fanar, evidently to have something to justify the police for the outrage they committed on my property on the 27th August, the full particulars of which I have already furnished your Excellency.

I would avail myself of this occasion to again thank your Excellency most sincerely for all the trouble you took to obtain the release of my men

I remain, &c.
(Signed) M. SEAGER.

No. 63.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 18.)

(No. 35.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 14, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 6 of the 6th January, respecting the execution of the general amnesty, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a communication from the Sublime Porte, stating that all Armenian prisoners who were entitled to benefit by the amnesty had been released previous to Sunday, the 2nd instant. This statement was at the date of writing incorrect, as the Bishop of Hasskeui, and all the other prisoners who had been tried

* Not printed.

before the Special Court after the date fixed for its dissolution, were, on the 9th January, still under arrest, nor had their cases come before the Court of Cassation for revision.

I am informed that the Bishop of Hasskeui has now been released.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 63.

Memorandum.

TOUS les détenus Arméniens bénéficiant de l'amnistie avait été déjà remis en liberté avant Dimanche dernier. Si quelques retards sont survenus dans la relaxation d'un petit nombre d'entre eux, c'est par suite de certains doutes que les autorités de la police avaient conçus sur leur participation aux derniers désordres. Mais aussitôt que l'affaire a été éclaircie, ils ont été également mis en liberté.

Sublime Porte, le 9 Janvier, 1897.

No. 64.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

(Secret.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 18, 1897.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you, in strict confidence, a copy of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of a project entertained by his Russian colleague for improving the financial situation in Turkey.*

M. de Nélidow suggests that a new Turkish loan should be raised, the interests of which should be provided by funds furnished by the Council of the Public Debt, and guaranteed by and administered under the supervision of the Powers.

Sir P. Currie inquires what view Her Majesty's Government would take of a guarantee by the Powers under such conditions, and I am to request that Lord Salisbury may be favoured with the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury on this point.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 65.

Anthopoulo Pasha to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 19.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments à sa Seigneurie le Marquis de Salisbury, et a l'honneur de lui communiquer, comme suite à ses précédentes notes, les informations qu'il vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement au sujet des mesures supplémentaires des réformes appliquées dans l'Empire Ottoman.

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, dans son désir d'assurer la gestion régulière des finances, vient de décréter la formation d'un Conseil des Finances, qui sera composé de quatre membres, dont deux étrangers et deux indigènes. Ce Conseil aura pour mission d'inspecter et réorganiser les finances des Administrations de la capitale et des provinces, de faciliter les rentrées du Trésor et organiser les différents services, d'empêcher toute dilapidation, et d'assurer l'observation exacte du Budget par un contrôle des fonctionnaires du fisc. Les diverses Administrations, les Chefs des Départements, et tous les fonctionnaires des Finances, seront tenus de se conformer aux communications de ce Conseil. En cas de divergence entre ce Conseil et les Départements et fonctionnaires susmentionnés, la Cour des Comptes sera appelée à se prononcer. Le dit Conseil publiera chaque six mois, par la voie des journaux, tout ce qu'il aura fait ou décidé de faire.

En outre, un Iradé Impérial ordonne l'institution d'une Commission composée d'officiers supérieurs d'État-Major et de quatre officiers étrangers, qui aura pour mandat de réorganiser les gendarmeries de la capitale et des provinces sur le modèle des gendarmeries Européens, d'examiner les capacités et la moralité des Chrétiens qui, d'après le plan des réformes, doivent être incorporés dans la gendarmerie, d'en

* No. 54.

éliminer les officiers et gendarmes qui ne présenteraient pas les conditions requises, et de les remplacer par des gens capables.

Des sections Financières et Civiles ont été formées au Conseil d'État: la section Financière surveillera la bonne marche des services Financiers pour assurer la stricte application du Budget; quant à la section Civile, qui sera placée sous la présidence de son Excellence Said Pacha, Président du Conseil d'État, elle aura à examiner toutes les résolutions importantes qui seront prises par les sections Législatives et Financières, à surveiller d'une façon permanente la mise à exécution et l'observation des Règlements dans toutes les branches de l'Administration, et entendre les plaintes qui seraient formulées contre l'Administration de l'État. Les Juges du Conseil d'État deviennent absolument indépendants, et ont, vis-à-vis du Président, une position analogue à celle des Juges des Tribunaux ordinaires envers le Ministre de de la Justice.

Il sera nommé des Chrétiens comme Muavins de Valis, de Mutessarifs, et de Caïmacans, ainsi que comme Inspecteurs Judiciaires dans les endroits où la proportion de la population l'exige, conformément aux dispositions du plan de réformes qui ont été étendues aux autres vilayets de l'Empire.

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a fait remise aux habitants Arméniens de l'Anatolie d'une ou deux années de la taxe d'exonération militaire, a ordonné que les agences de la Banque Agricole leur fissent les avances dont ils peuvent avoir besoin, que des semences leur fussent prêtées, que leurs écoles fussent réparées, que des Commissions composées de fonctionnaires et de Délégués des dits habitants fussent formées pour la restitution à leurs propriétaires des champs abandonnés lors des derniers incidents, et pour le renvoi dans leurs foyers des femmes et jeunes filles qui auraient fui durant les désordres, que la liberté de conscience fût respectée, que la presse modifiât le langage violent dont elle usait envers les Arméniens par suite des menées des révolutionnaires, enfin, que l'on facilitât la réintégration dans leurs postes de ceux d'entre eux qui, se trouvant aux services des Sociétés telles que le Chirket Hourié, ou des entreprises privées, les avaient abandonnés pendant les dits événements.

Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres,
le 18 Janvier, 1897.

No. 66.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 17. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 19, 1897, 11·15 A.M.*

BARON CALICE read a long statement yesterday, at the Ambassadors' meeting, on the subject of the Law of 1880 for the European provinces, showing the danger and difficulty of applying it under present circumstances.

He was ready to agree to an International Commission for the provinces, on condition that its mission should be limited to enforcing reforms which the Sultan, on various occasions during the past year, has declared his intention of extending to Macedonia, with the addition of those which he promised M. Stoiloff during the visit of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria.

This proposal having been adopted unanimously, it was resolved that a similar Commission for the Asiatic provinces should be recommended as well.

No. 67.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 22, 1897.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1101 of the 30th ultimo, inclosing a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas giving statistics of the disorders which have occurred in the Vilayet of Sivas in 1895 and 1896.

I request that your Excellency will convey to Major Bulman my thanks for the care taken by him in the preparation of these statistics.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 68.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 22, 1897.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 34 of the 13th instant, inclosing correspondence explaining the circumstances which led to the arrest of Mr. McCallum by the Turkish authorities at Marash in November last.

I concur in your Excellency's view that under the circumstances, there was no justification for the arrest of Mr. McCallum, and I approve your proposal to claim from the Porte an indemnity on his behalf as compensation for the treatment to which he was subjected.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 69.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 38.)
My Lord, *Paris, January 22, 1897.*

M. HANOTAUX stated to me the day before yesterday that he had no recent news from Constantinople; but at the Diplomatic dinner at the Élysée the same evening (from attending which I had excused myself in consequence of its being the anniversary of the death of the lamented Prince Henry of Battenberg) he informed my Austrian colleague that since his reception of the foreign Representatives that afternoon he had received an exceedingly encouraging telegram from M. Cambon as to the progress made in the Ambassadorial discussions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 69*.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 27.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 23, 1897.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 33 of the 12th instant inclosing a letter from Mr. Seager with regard to the release of his Armenian employés, and calling attention to the statements made by him regarding the tortures inflicted upon two of them while in prison.

I request that your Excellency will bring the circumstances related by Mr. Seager to the knowledge of the Porte, and make a strong remonstrance against the adoption of such measures by the Turkish prison officials.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 70.

Consul-General Wood to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 1.)
My Lord, *Tabriz, January 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch and its inclosures which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran regarding the persecution of Nestorians on Turkish territory by Sheikh Saddik and his relatives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 70.

Consul-General Wood to Sir M. Durand.

(No. 2.)

Tabriz, January 4, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency the copy of a letter which has been addressed to me by the Reverend Irving, of our Mission in Urumiah, giving details of further persecutions of the Nestorians in Turkish territory by the notorious Sheikh Saddik and relatives of his.

It also appears from Mr. Irving's letter that the Nestorians are about to be forced by the said Sheikh Saddik to sign a declaration stating that certain robberies and murders committed by his relatives had been carried out by Moussa Beg,* the Kurd who has distinguished himself hitherto by the greatest kindness to the Nestorians and other Christians during the late massacres on Turkish territory.

Our missionaries seem exceedingly anxious that the Metropolitan of Nochea, who is at present a refugee at Kochanés, should be brought over to Persian territory.

Through your Excellency's efforts, orders were obtained from Constantinople some time ago for leave to the Metropolitan to cross to Persia, but it would seem that such orders were not carried out as they ought to have been.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CECIL G. WOOD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 70.

Rev. F. F. Irving to Consul-General Wood.

English Mission, Urmi, Persia,

December 27, 1896.

Dear Mr. Wood,

IN my letter of a fortnight or so ago, I told you that, owing to the great influx of Syrian refugees from Turkey, numbers of whom are settling temporarily in Tergawar (a district bordering on Turkey, a short day's journey from Urmi), it had been thought well by our Mission that I should take up my abode there for the winter to oversee the village schools we have established there for their benefit, and to do anything in my power to render assistance to the fugitives. Accordingly, I have been resident in a village of Tergawar, named Balulan, since the 10th December, and only came down to Urmi on the 24th to spend Christmas and report the state of things as I had found them in that district.

We have taken counsel together on the subject, and it has been decided that I send you an account, as concise as may be, of the more important events with which I have become acquainted, and especially to ask you to do your utmost to render us effective assistance in respect of matters in Nochea in Turkey, which very nearly concern the Matran, of which I will presently write in detail.

It may be well to remind you, though you are, I think, already possessed of the facts of what happened after the murders perpetrated upon Mar Gauriel and his party in the summer. The Matran (Metropolitan) was, of course, in great peril, and you were kind enough to help us in trying to get from the Turkish Government permission for him to come to Urmi under a sufficiently strong escort. I believe, nominally, such permission was conceded, but, as you doubtless know, in such a way as to be altogether ineffectual, and the Matran found himself quite debarred from any chance of getting to Persia.

By the assistance of the Kurdish Chief, Musa Beg, who has throughout shown the greatest kindness to the Christians, he effected his escape to the Patriarch Mar Shimun, where it was thought he would be in greater security, and although he has been making every effort to come down to Persia, he has found the way blocked, and is still at Qudshanis (Kochanes), and, I suppose, now he will certainly remain there till the spring, though, if it were at all possible to obtain a Government escort, he could even now come, and would be only too thankful to do so.

Meanwhile his household, under the charge of his father, Qasha Khanana, and his uncle, Qasha Rehana, men of good parts, and very discreet, remain in Nochea.

Seeing that the only hope of Christians being permitted to remain unmolested in

* See Mr. Wood's despatch No. 32, July 23, 1896.

that district was by carrying favour with the Sheikh Saddik, the Matran's relatives went to him, with presents of sheep, to pay their respects and endeavour to conciliate him.

He, however, rudely refused to see them, and so threatening did things appear that they saw immediate action must be taken to effect their escape from his power.

Hence, that very evening, the family of the Matran, with as many of their dependents as was possible, numbering in all some twenty souls, and carrying with them some household goods and a considerable number of sheep, left their village secretly, and after a forced march of twenty-four hours, reached Tergawar on the Persian side of the frontier, and found temporary shelter in the house of the Syrian priest of Balulan, where they still are.

Some few days after I had gone up to Tergawar, on the 13th instant a Syrian, Malik Mamu, a man of some importance in Nochea, made his appearance in Balulan, and told the following story, which has since received every corroboration. Shortly before he fled from Nochea the Syed Mirza Islam, cousin of Sheikh Saddik, went to the village of Mar Khazkiel, and, remaining outside, sent his servant to tell the Syrian priest, Qasha Sarkan (a near relative of the Qasha Denkha, who was murdered in the summer), that he had a letter written in Syriac, which he wished him to come and translate. Upon his coming the Syed deliberately shot him through the head.

Then Syed Mirza Islam went to another village in the same neighbourhood named Beit Timo, and, mounting the roof of the Syrian Malik Brimo, called to him through the smoke opening to come out to him, as he had some business with him. As the man emerged from the door he is said to have shot him dead, but this is not absolutely certain, and it was reported subsequently that Brimo had succeeded in making his escape.

These events took place quite openly about midday, and the Syed, who, of course, is immensely powerful from his connection with the Sheikh, went about his ordinary business as if nothing had happened.

These events were duly reported by us to the Archbishop on Sunday last, the 20th instant, but on Wednesday last, the 23rd instant, two servants of the Matran, who, with others, had been left in Nochea in charge of his property, arrived in Balulan, bringing the following disquieting news: A body of Kurds, about eighty in number, all men of the Sheikh, and led by his chief servants, Hasan Beg, son of Sultan Ahmed, and Kratu, son of Haji Mohamed, his Commander-in-chief, had made a raid upon the Matran's house, and carried off a large portion of his goods.

This had, of course, caused great consternation among the Christians, but, what was even much more serious, the men said that Sheikh Saddik had sent for the chief men of the Syrians throughout the district to sign a document stating that this robbery had been done by Musa Beg, the Kurd who has shown so much kindness to the Matran, and that it was he who compassed the death of Qasha Sarkan and Malik Brimo.

It is unnecessary for me to tell you that for Syrians to sign such a document, although it is only too likely they will be forced into doing so, would be altogether disastrous. It would be a weapon against them, not only in the hands of the Sheikh, but also in those of the Turkish Government, and would of course utterly destroy the friendship of Musa Beg, who has already been taunted with the name of Christian, and charged with disloyalty for the protection he has extended to the Syrians.

Under these circumstances, the only possibility of checkmating the Sheikh seems to be by procuring from the Sultan a really strong Firman for their protection, which of course he would only give under the greatest pressure.

We do not, of course, presume to dictate, or even to indicate to you, the policy to be pursued in order to secure such protection, but we thought you would probably think it was well to telegraph the more important portions of this letter in cypher to London, and thus bring pressure to bear upon Constantinople. We do very earnestly beg, and at the same time feel confident that you will do all that is in your power, and we would add only that, for the Matran's own security and that of his family, it is of the first importance that it should be kept secret that the action we are taking in the matter is due to representations made by members of his household.

We have seized the very earliest opportunity of making known to you these facts, as we are convinced that the matter is one which admits of no delay, and that, unless something really effective can be done at once, very serious results will follow for the Christians of Nochea.

For yourself, it is of course quite superfluous for me to add that these Christians thus in jeopardy are Syrians, and have absolutely nothing to do with the affairs of the

Armenians, with whom, to their prejudice, they are so apt to be confounded in England.

We do not apologize for troubling you with this statement, as we feel sure that you would consider it our duty to make it.

With our united kind regards, believe me, &c.,

(Signed) F. F. IRVING.

No. 71.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 25.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 15, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis reporting on the execution of reforms in his district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 71.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 67.)

Sir, *Bitlis, December* 22, 1896.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 61 of the 24th ultimo, and to my telegram No. 125 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that up to the present date, so far as I have been able to ascertain, ninety Christian gendarmes have been enrolled in the Vilayet of Bitlis, viz, :—

In Bitlis Sandjak	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Mush ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
Sairt ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Guenj ,,	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
							90

The Vali declares that places are left open so that the due proportion may be completed when other Christians come forward to enlist in the gendarmerie.

In Bitlis town there are now seven Armenian police, including one third-class and one second-class "commissaire," and ten Mussulman police. The total force is seventeen, not ten or eleven, as I stated in my despatch above referred to. The seven Armenians are said to have been all well-known spies.

Four "Tahsildars" (unarmed tax collectors)—one Christian and three Mussulmans—appear to have been appointed for the Sandjak of Bitlis, but I still hear of taxes being collected in villages by gendarmes.

Besides the three nahiés in the Bitlis Sandjak, mentioned in my despatch above referred to, two or three other nahiés outside the Bitlis Sandjak have, according to what the Vali said to me a week ago, been organized under the reform scheme, and the Vali said that other nahiés also were being so organized. I am informed that a Christian Mudir has been elected for one of the three nahiés in the Bitlis Sandjak.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 72.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 25.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord, *Pera, January* 16, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular officers at Van and Erzeroum respecting the misdeeds committed by certain Kurdish Chiefs in their respective districts, and suggesting the measures to be adopted against them.

I have communicated these despatches to my French and Russian colleagues, and have obtained from them a promise of co-operation in regard to these Chiefs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 72.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 43.)

Sir, *Van, December* 15, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that I am informed that the three Pashas referred to in my telegram of the 29th October—Emin, Hosein, and Hadji Temer—are now on their way to Erzinghian. Turkish opinion here strongly condemns this method of dealing with these men. They say, and rightly, that their crimes having been committed in the Vilayet of Van, they should have been brought here for trial. It is also said that Zeki Pasha, the Mushir, who is, without doubt, largely responsible for the Kurdish massacres, will do nothing to them. There can be no security in the Caza of Aijisch, unless these Kurds are punished. Emin Pasha is much the worst, and I sincerely hope that it will be possible to have him exiled. Deep snow has fallen all over the vilayet, which will keep the Kurds quiet until the end of March. There have been a good many small robberies of corn from the Armenian villages; a village in Kavash has had its sheep stolen, and five Armenians have been killed in Cagar. The Vali is quite powerless, and none of the authors of these outrages have been punished. If this state of insecurity is allowed to continue, there must be a famine in 1897–98. Time is slipping away; very little wheat was sown this autumn, and unless means are taken at once to insure security for next spring, it will be impossible for the Armenian peasants to borrow money to buy cattle for the spring ploughing. Prices are rising almost daily, as the prospect of something serious being done appears to be more remote. An epidemic of typhoid has decimated the population of Van since last June, and there appears to be no sign of its ceasing.

One of the most intelligent Armenians here told me that if one prominent Kurdish Chief were to be brought a prisoner into Van, the villagers would begin to have confidence in the intentions of the Government, and all will be well. If not they will all have to get out of the country. Several of the richer townspeople are quietly making preparations to go next spring, as they despair of anything being done. I have no fear of further massacres; but from a practical point of view death by starvation is worse than death by the sword. It is impossible for me to exaggerate this danger, and it is terrible to sit here and see things drifting this way, when I know how easily these Kurds might be brought to reason. The Russian Vice-Consul is away at Tiflis. The French Consular Agent is dangerously ill with typhoid fever. Their views are, I believe, the same as mine. At the risk of being tedious, I beg again to point out the measures which are absolutely necessary, and the very least which will meet the case:—

1. Exile of Emin Pasha.
2. Arrest and exile of Darbas Khan of the Shemsiki tribe.
3. Categorical orders to the Vali directing him henceforth to arrest all Kurds guilty of crimes.
4. Categorical orders to the General Officer Commanding the troops to assist the Civil Power, when necessary, to attain these ends.
5. Hamidieh regiments in the vilayet to be under the orders of the General Officer Commanding the 8th Division of the 4th Army Corps, Ferik Shemsi Pasha.
6. Officers of Hamidieh cavalry to be liable to trial by court-martial on the demand of the Civil authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 72.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Van, January* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to your Excellency's letter of the 14th December, that the Shemsiki Kurds have continually raided ever since I have been here. Darbas Khan is their Chief, and could, if he liked, keep his tribesmen in order. He has declined to come into Van when sent for by both the present and late Valis, and is, therefore, to all intents and purposes in a state of revolt.

I know that he has a lot of stolen cattle which he is keeping at Kotur in Persia. One of his sons, an officer of Hamidieh, has been particularly active in the work of pillage and murder. He could not have done this without his father's consent. Wherever I go within a certain distance of Van, I hear of this man and his tribe, from both Moslem and Christian.

The following is but an imperfect list of the deeds of the Shemsiki:—

1. The murder of eight Armenians at the village of Faronth, reported in my despatch No. 6.

2. Plunder of villages of Ermanis, Eskipag, and Deghirmen, twenty-five Armenians murdered; *vide* my despatch No. 9.

3. In June last they plundered and killed in every direction. They burnt the celebrated Monastery of the Seven Churches, which has never been touched for 600 years, wrecked the altar and killed the priests.

4. They carried off corn, &c., from Artchak and Karagandery, leaving the people in a state of absolute destitution.

5. They carried off the few cattle that the villages of Deghirmen had managed to buy with the last of their money. Not a grain of wheat has therefore been sown in this village. This took place in October.

6. They pillaged the village of Eskipag in the same month, carrying off the few cattle bought in the same way, and leaving the poor people in a most pitiable state. If I had not been able to help them, most of them must have died.

These cases are notorious, and admit of no dispute. The Vali with the best intentions in the world can do nothing. Turkish feeling against the Kurds is getting stronger every day, and in the interests of Moslem and Christian it is absolutely necessary that something should be done.

To give an example of the state in which the Kurds now are, it is sufficient to mention the following.

A few days ago a party of Haidirauli Kurds came over the lake from Edeljevas, attacked Taver Beg of the Shauli Kurds, whose sheep were wintering near Djanig. They carried off 500, quietly embarked them and went home. Djanig is the seat of a Mudir! Javer Beg then attacked the Haideranli at Pergri (the seat of a Kaïmakam), and one or two men were killed on either side. The Vali has reported this and asked for instructions. He has so far received no reply from either the Sublime Porte or the Mushir.

Emin Pasha who has been summoned to Erzinghian, and who, I was informed, had gone, has had the audacity to send here and say simply that he won't go.

The General Commanding here is most anxious to get hold of some of the officers of Hamidieh cavalry, and try them by court-martial, but Zeki Pasha stands in the way.

It is a scandal of the greatest magnitude, that with all the troops now in the vilayet, the Kurds should be allowed to do just as they please. Until they are brought to reason there can be no hope whatever for the Christians in the vilayet. Even the Kurds themselves want something done.

If orders were sent from Constantinople to the Vali to arrest Emin Pasha and Darbas Khan, and sanctioning the employment of troops if necessary, the whole business would be settled in two days without the slighest difficulty or disturbance of any kind. No words of mine can exaggerate the importance of what I advocate. Local Turkish opinion is entirely with me in this matter, while the Armenians look on it as a matter of life or death.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 72.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, January* 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that the notorious Kurd Chiefs Hussein, Emin, and Hadji Temer Pashas passed through Erzeroum a few days ago on their way to Erzingian, whither they have been summoned by the Mushir, Zeki Pasha.

In his despatch to your Excellency No. 43 of the 15th ultimo, Major Williams reported their departure for Erzingian, and insisted very strongly on the importance of providing against the return of Emin Pasha, at least, to the district which he has so long terrorized.

The misdeeds of Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, in the borderlands of the Erzeroum, Van, and Bitlis vilayets, are so well known, and have formed the subject of so many Consular Reports that it would be tedious to recapitulate them; suffice it to say that this is the fourth or fifth time since my arrival here nearly five years ago that these Chiefs, on the complaint of the Civil authorities, have been summoned to the head-quarters of the 4th Army Corps, ostensibly to answer for their countless crimes of violence, and that the general expectation is that they will now, as on all former occasions, be allowed to return unpunished and resume their evil courses, though not without paying a heavy sum for this liberty, in accordance with precedent.

If the Turkish Government is at all sincere in its professions of anxiety for reform, this seems to me to be an admirable opportunity to prove its sincerity by at last putting an effectual stop to the career of these arch-disturbers of the peace of Turkish Armenia. From every point of view their removal is urgently called for. Politically speaking, this measure would bring us nearer to a solution of the Armenian difficulty than the execution of any or all of the administrative reforms which have been promulgated. For, on the one hand it would, by the force of example, put an effectual check upon Mussulman oppression and lawlessness in general, whilst impressing upon the Hamidieh Cavalry the fact that the uniform which they now disgrace will no longer screen even the most powerful among them from punishment, tardy though it be. On the other hand, it would in a great measure cut the ground from under the feet of the Armenian agitators by removing one of the most obvious justifications for Armenian discontent, and serve as an earnest of stronger and better government in the future.

The economic effects would be not less important, for, as Major Williams points out, some such striking example can alone avert impending famine in the Van district, where, in default of security, the Armenian villagers will not be able to plough and sow their lands this spring. At the same time, the Erzeroum–Van caravan road, which is now exposed to their depredations, would be rendered safe, and there would be some chance of trade with the interior, which is now at so low an ebb, reviving to some extent.

I have discussed the subject in all its bearings with the Vali of Erzeroum, who assures me, confidentially, that the Valis of Van and Bitlis are now reporting in identical terms with himself on the advisability of exiling the three Kurd Pashas. My French and Russian colleagues seem equally agreed as to the urgency of the case, and are, I believe, reporting to their respective Ambassadors in the same sense by this mail.

The opportunity which now offers for their deportation direct from Erzingian, with no trouble or display of military force, is an unique one, and I would strongly urge that it be not lost. An administrative order for their perpetual exile to some distant province would, I think, best meet the requirements of the case, for the delays and uncertainties of Turkish justice, as exemplified in the parallel case of Moussa Bey, would thus be avoided. But if this chance be thrown away, and the powerful occult influences which protect these wholesale murderers and brigands triumph over the unanimous recommendations both of the responsible Turkish Governors, and of the foreign Consular Representatives, the effect cannot be otherwise than disastrous, and will dash the faint hopes which I hear beginning to be expressed, that the year on which we have just entered may prove to be the first of a new and brighter era now dawning for this blighted and misgoverned country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 73.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 42.)
Constantinople, January 17, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, transmitting a report from the Consular agent at Mosul, as to the inaction of the local authorities in carrying out the reforms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 73.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 112.)
Bagdad, December 22, 1896.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour respectfully to forward, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a despatch from the British Consular agent at Mosul, containing items of news which appear to be noteworthy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 73.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 53.)
(Translation.)
Mosul, December 15, 1896.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Commission appointed for carrying out reforms in this vilayet, of which I informed your Honour in my letter No. 50 dated the 24th October last, has hitherto given effect to no part of them (I mean with respect to appointment of assistants and organisation of police and zaptiehs from Christians), for the Acting Vali chose to defer taking action until the arrival of Zehdi Pasha, the new Vali appointed for this Vilayet, who arrived here yesterday, and I this day paid his Excellency the visit due on the occasion. It appears that the local authorities intend to fix the number of the Christians of this vilayet at a reduced figure in order to diminish their rights, for they show the number of the male adults to be 7,000, whereas they are more than 14,000, according to the computation for which they levy military tax, and if those concealed be taken into consideration they will prove to be more than 20,000. However, I shall be watching the plan of action which the new Vali may adopt, and report the result.

(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 74.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 43.)
Constantinople, January 17, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 872, of the 27th October, 1896, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the recovery of the Armenian girls abducted by Turks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 74.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 65.)
Kharput, December 28, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency No. 49 of the 7th of last October, reporting, among other things, the abduction by Turks of three Armenian girls from the Vilayet of Sivas to various villages in the Malatia Sandjak, I now have the honour to report that at the request of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, and as soon as the newly-appointed Mutessarif of Malatia had reached his post, I made fresh representations to the Vali with a view to the girls' restoration to their friends. I placed a Memorandum in his hands containing the details set forth in my despatch of the date referred to, urging him at the same time to avail himself of the change of Mutessarifs to have the matter thoroughly investigated.

Raouf Bey thereupon sent the necessary instructions to Malatia, and the young women were shortly afterwards found and sent on by the authorities to Sivas. Major Bulman now informs me, however, that one of the three declares her intention of continuing in the Mussulman faith.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 75.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 44.)
Constantinople, January 17, 1897.

My Lord,

FOR some time past the Armenian Patriarchate has been endeavouring to take advantage of the more conciliatory attitude of the Sultan, and of the disposition prevalent at the Palace to make a show of introducing reforms, in order to obtain some concessions, chiefly for the alleviation of the misery prevailing in the provinces.

The concessions desired were formulated under twelve heads, and submitted by Artin Pasha to the Sultan. After protracted negotiation and many changes in the text of the Petition, an Iradé was issued to-day nominally granting the twelve points, but really so modifying them as to deprive them of most of their value.

I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum giving the demands of the Patriarch and the concessions of the Sultan. The only privilege granted of any importance is the remission for one year of the tax paid by Christians in lieu of military service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Memorandum of Demands made by the Armenian Patriarch and the Reply of the Porte thereto.

Demand.	*Reply.*
1. THREE years' remission of military exemption tax (Bedel-i-askeriye).	ONE year to be granted to such Armenians as are found by the Councils of vilayets to be really unable to pay.
2. Agricultural banks to make advances on moderate terms to Armenian agriculturists.	Granted.
3. Authorities to supply seed-corn to Armenians.	Granted if sufficient grain exists, and on condition of repayment from crop.
4. Sum to be set apart on the Education Budget for reconstruction of schools destroyed.	Granted. The salaries of the Turkish teachers in Armenian schools will be paid out of the fund of the Ministry.

Demand.	*Reply.*
5. Public Debt, Railway Company, and Steam-ship Companies to take back dismissed Armenians.	These Companies will be informed that the State does not object to Armenians being reinstated.
6. 2,000*l.* to be given to Patriarchate as relief, and a Commission to be formed at the Patriarchate to collect subscriptions.	As Commission already sits at Top-hane, there is no need of one at the Patriarchate. The 2,000*l.* will be given to the Commission, and the Patriarch may add two members.
7. Nomination of Armenian Muavins of Mutessarifs and Kaïmakams.	Already being carried out not only in the six provinces, but in others as well. The new Commission for the appointment of officials will attend to this, Diran Bey being specially charged with it.
8. Nomination of Armenian police and gendarmes.	Already being carried out.
9. Local Turkish newspapers to cease their attacks on Armenians.	The press laws strictly prohibit such action.
10. Privileges of the Patriarchate to be maintained as regards ecclesiastics charged with offences.	In judging such ecclesiastics the laws and customs will be strictly complied with.
Abolition of system of detectives.	This is a matter of police which concerns no one else.
Election of tax-gatherers by population.	Not admitted either by laws or reforms.
11. Armenians to be admitted to Government schools on the same footing as other Christians.	Will be granted.
Commission to examine title-deeds of property which may have changed hands during the recent disturbances.	Such Commission exists under the reform; will be further instructed.
12. Forced conversions to be declared invalid. Abducted women and girls to be restored to their parents.	All religions being quite free in Turkey, this will be carried out.

No. 76.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 25.)

(No. 47.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 18, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, reporting that the ex-Patriarch, Mgr. Ismirlian, and other Armenian ecclesiastics exiled to Jerusalem, had not received a pardon under the terms of the general amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, December* 29, 1896.

ON the 24th instant I had the honour to receive your Excellency's telegram of the 23rd instant, stating that an amnesty had been issued granting pardon to Armenian prisoners, except those under sentence of death and notorious agitators, and instructing me to report the result by telegraph.

I at once made inquiries as to whether notification of such an amnesty had been received here, and was informed by the Armenian Patriarch, whom I saw on the subject, that there were no Armenian prisoners, at present, in any of the prisons in this Mutessariflik, but that the ex-Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Mgr. Ismirlian, the Archbishop of Erzeroum, Mgr. Chichmanian, and the Archimandrite Nersès, of Mush, who had been exiled to this city, and permitted to reside in the Armenian Monastery, had had no intimation of the pardon in question. Before, however, replying to your Excellency, I waited a day longer to see whether they would be set at liberty, but this not having been done, I telegraphed to your Excellency on the 26th instant as follows:—

"Your telegram of the 23rd.

"There are no Armenian prisoners in the local prison here. The exiled Armenian Prelates and Patriarch have not, until now, been pardoned."

I have the honour to add that his Excellency the Governor of Jerusalem received a telegram almost identical in its terms with the one above referred to sent by your Excellency, but that he did not consider that it was applicable to the Armenian exiles, who, he alleges, are under sentence of banishment, and not in the local prison, and are therefore not to be understood as coming under the general amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 77.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received January* 25.)

(No. 51. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 20, 1897.

THE plan of financial reform for the Turkish Empire advocated by the Russian and French Ambassadors includes the guarantee by the Six Powers of a loan, the interest of which would be provided out of the sum of 200,000*l.* now applied by the Council of the Public Debt for the purpose of a sinking fund.

They believe that the consent of the bondholders might be obtained to this arrangement, and that it would secure the guaranteeing Powers against any financial liability.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of a Report on this proposal which has been drawn up, at my request, by Sir Vincent Caillard, who has heard directly from the French Ambassador his views on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Report by Sir V. Caillard.

WHEN the Turkish Government came in 1881 to the composition with its creditors embodied in the Decree of Mouharrem, there was an outstanding debt to the Ottoman Bank and certain other Galata Banks of £ T. 8,170,000. In repayment of this debt the banks accepted 5 per Cent. bonds to the amount stated, the service of the bonds, including interest and sinking fund, being secured by a *first charge* of £ T. 590,000 on the revenues ceded to the bondholders.

In 1890, these 5 per Cent. bonds were converted into 4 per Cents, leaving at the disposal of the Public Debt Council an annuity of £ T. 159,500, which it was stipulated should be applied to the amortization of the four "series" of Ottoman bonds in certain proportions. This annuity, having formed part of the original annuity of £ T. 590,000 which was a first charge on the Debt, has lost that advantage only to this extent, that it would rank second to the £ T. 430,500 necessary for the service of the present 4 per Cent. priority bonds. It has been increased since it was first established in 1890 by a further annuity of, in round figures, £ T. 40,500, arising from the interest on the bonds redeemed by its action; the total annuity, therefore, is now £ T. 200,000.

This increase does not form a privileged charge upon the revenues as does the original annuity, but, being the interest on redeemed bonds, ranks in the same way

as the charge for interest on the whole Debt, *i.e.*, prior to the *ordinary* sinking fund. The margin, however, is so large and the annuity so small, that there would not, I believe, be much difficulty in giving it the same privilege as the original annuity, should the principle of the whole scheme, briefly discussed below, be accepted by the bondholders.

To show how good a security this privileged position would constitute, it will be sufficient to mention that the total net revenues of the Public Debt Administration amounted last year, in round figures, to £ T. 2,150,000.* This year, if the Bulgarian Government pays the Eastern Roumelian annuity, the revenues will show a good increase, in spite of the deplorable condition of the Empire. From this must be deducted the first charge of £ T. 430,500 assigned to the priority bonds, leaving a total net available revenue of £ T. 1,719,500, on which the annuity of £ T. 200,000 would come as a first charge. The margin of safety amounts, therefore, to £ T. 1,519,500.

It may be added that, of the total *gross* ceded revenues, amounting last year to £ T. 2,501,000, £ T. 2,196,000 are under the direct control and management of the Council or its lessee (the tobacco monopoly); of the remainder, the Turkish Government has to pay £ T. 152,596 by bills on the customs, and the Bulgarian Government £ T. 152,000 in respect of the Eastern Roumelian tribute.

I append a Table, for clearness' sake, giving the detail of the revenues:—

Comparative Statement of Revenues during the Years 1894–95 and 1895–96.

Heads of Revenues.	1894–95.	1895–96.	Increase or Decrease.	Proportion.
	£ T.	£ T.	£ T.	Per cent.
Revenues.				
Directly administered by the Council—				
Salt	727,193·81	735,928·02	+ 8,734·21	1·18
Spirits	261,780·19	260,616·84	− 1,163·35	0·45
Stamps	230,624·97	212,388·95	− 18,236·02	8·56
Fisheries	43,037·62	46,356·07	+ 3,318·45	7·16
Silk	52,879·12	46,773·55	− 6,105·57	13·05
Tobacco, Mourouriyé, and Beyie	4,514·21	3,340·38	− 1,173·83	35·14
Tobacco tithe (substituted provisionally for Bulgarian tribute)	126,470·24	94,674·58	− 31,795·66	33·58
Total	1,446,500·16	1,400,078·39	− 46,421·77	3·31
Farmed—				
Tobacco monopoly (royalty of the Régie share in profits, repayment of advances, &c.)	796,135·18	796,275·40	+ 140·22	0·02
Total	2,242,635·34	2,196,353·79	− 46,281·55	2·10
Permanent Assignments.				
Eastern Roumelian tribute	152,026·32	152,026·32	..	..
Bills on Customs (substituted for excess of the Cyprus revenues)	102,596·00	102,596·00	..	..
Bills on Customs (on account of duties on Tumbéki)	50,000·00	50,000·00	..	..
General total of revenues during the year	2,547,257·66	2,500,976·11	− 46,281·55	1·85

Thus, if the annuity of £ T. 200,000 were given the privileged position described, it would form, in my opinion, an admirable security.

It is believed that the following scheme would ultimately lead to effective administrative, as well as financial, reform of the Turkish Empire, under the united supervision of the Great Powers.

A loan guaranteed by the Great Powers should be granted to the Turkish

* The average net revenues of the last five years were £ T. 2,155,000.

Government. To the service of this loan should be assigned the above annuity of £ T. 200,000, ranking in the privileged position above set forth. With this security, backed by such a guarantee, it should be possible to issue a 3 per Cent. loan at par; and if it were provided that the loan was to be repaid by half-yearly drawings extending over a period of forty years, the gross proceeds would amount to £ T. 4,640,000. Should the term be extended to ninety years, this amount would be increased to £ T. 6,203,000.

The administration of the loan should be intrusted to a Commission of a description similar to that of the Sanitary Commission; the European members, to be named by the Great Powers, should be in a majority. This Commission would not only supervise the expenditure of all funds-in-aid granted to the Turkish Government out of the loan, but would grant nothing at all to any Department without first having satisfied itself that the demand made was just, and the expenditure for which the money was required proper and useful. As all the non-productive Departments of State are heavily in arrear, this would necessitate a complete overhauling of the chief part of the State accounts, and the Commission would, in no long time, acquire great power. It would, in fact, if composed of men well versed in State administration, knowing what was the ultimate object of the Commission, working intelligently and disinterestedly for it, and properly supported by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers, presently acquire the entire financial and principal administrative power in the State. For to know whether expenditure demanded for such and such a Department was really useful and proper, a complete inquiry would have to be effected into the *ordinary* expenditure of that Department. If it were found, as would almost invariably be the case, that there had been waste and improper expenditure, the Commission should, before granting any funds-in-aid, take measures that these should be put an end to, which might, indeed ought, to entail the nomination by the Commission of a Delegate to assume complete control of the expenditure of the Department in question. This, in its turn, entails the control could be limited to the functions of the Department in the capital, but must necessarily be extended to provinces in which it has authority. The Commission should from the outset have the power to dismiss the chief officials of any Department who withheld or gave false information to it.

It might, quite naturally, be said that, even if the Commission were instituted, and succeeded in following the lines above sketched forth, its powers would last only so long as the funds at its disposal. It must not, however, be supposed that a loan of £ T. 6,000,000 is sufficient to set matters straight. In the first place, the deficit, whether one takes the recently published Budget or that elaborated by Sir Edgar Vincent as a basis, show, if the figures be honestly dealt with, an excess of expenditure over revenue of about £ T. 2,500,000. But if allowances are made, which always should be made, by any competent Finance Minister for arrears, revenues which fail to come in, &c., the real deficit turns out at upwards of £ T. 4,000,000, a figure which is probably not far from the truth. To turn a Budget with a huge deficit like this, huge in proportion to the total revenue, with all the accumulated deficits of past years to get rid of, into a perfectly sound and balanced Budget by means of a loan of £ T. 6,000,000, is a manifest impossibility. It is certain that before real financial order could be established the Commission would have to apply for another loan of, probably, at least a like amount. And the reorganization would take time. You cannot, however pretty it sounds on paper, cut down expenditure in every direction with the stroke of a pen;—greater disorder still would probably ensue. In any case, whether a new loan were required or not, the Great Powers could, long before the first loan were expended, insist on the Commission being rendered permanent. They would have amply sufficient grounds for so doing by having guaranteed the loan, since they could represent that in order to avoid their guarantee being called into play, they have a right to see that the Public Debt revenues are not jeopardized by the Turkish Government again reducing itself to the straits in which it now is. Until their request were granted, they could instruct their Delegates to grant no further funds-in-aid.

It is thus an essential part of the scheme that the guarantee of the Great Powers should be forthcoming. I have already shown above how excellent is the security suggested, *i.e.*, that there is a margin of safety of £ T. 1,519,500 derived from revenues (with the exception of a little over £ T. 300,000) entirely under the control of the Public Debt Council, or its lessee, the tobacco monopoly, which is a European concern, entirely directed by Europeans. The rent paid by this monopoly alone, viz., £ T. 700,000 net *at least*, is more than sufficient to cover the service of the Priority

Loan and the loan now suggested. It seems to me beyond the range of the remotest probability that, with such a security as this, the guarantee could ever be called into action, unless either the Sultan laid violent hands on the Public Debt revenues, including that of the tobacco monopoly, or else the final downfall of Turkey took place.

But I venture to submit that these two risks really resolve themselves into one only, viz., the latter, and that should that catastrophe occur, it would be easy for the Great Powers to absolutely cover their guarantee in effecting the ultimate settlement. I venture, therefore, also to submit that the Governments of the Great Powers can assume the guarantee without any fear for the future.

The question remains whether the present bondholders would consent to alienating part of the revenues ceded to them in liquidation of the former bankruptcy. It is a question upon which I think they would have to be consulted, for the Public Debt Council has no powers to consent to an alteration of the Decree of Mouharrem, especially in the sense of an alienation of revenue. Its powers are really limited to the execution of that Decree. I do not think, however, that there would be much difficulty in obtaining the consent of the bondholders if they could be shown counterbalancing advantages, and, in my opinion, these counterbalancing advantages would exist.

1. The action of the Powers in restoring financial and administrative order in Turkey would vastly increase the present security of the Turkish Debt, because—

(*a.*) By guaranteeing the suggested loan the bondholders acquire *ipso facto* the protection of the Great Powers, for these could not permit any meddling, from whatever quarter, with the Debt revenues, in the interest of their own guarantee. To mark this, the bondholders would require as a condition of their consent that the Governments of the Great Powers should take official note of the Circular addressed to them by the Porte in 1881, giving communication of the Decree of Mouharrem.

(*b.*) With administrative and financial order in the Empire, the Debt revenues would quickly increase.

(*c.*) The Great Powers would be directly interested in inducing their subjects to submit themselves to taxes collected by the Public Debt Administration, and which have received the approval of the Embassies, such, for instance, as the stamps duties, which, if foreigners would comply with the law, might easily give double what they produce now.

2. A slight financial inducement to the bondholders might be to give them a preferential right to subscribe to the new loan, and, in fact, this would be advisable.

3. In connection with this scheme, the regular payment of the Eastern Roumelian annuity becomes of very great importance. It is very improbable that if the bondholders saw one revenue of £ T. 152,000 slipping away from them, they would consent to the sacrifice of another of £ T. 200,000.

In conclusion, I feel constrained to say this: Throughout this Memorandum I have assumed that, side by side with the financial scheme above described, some effective measures would be adopted to restore security and peace in the Empire. Unless this be done, it is impossible to establish a sound Budget, or to carry out financial and administrative reform with any hope of success, since the sources of revenue would be continually dwindling and drying up. Further, if the Sultan be not in some way effectively checked, if the power be left in his hands to thwart the work of the Commission, as it must if the Ministers remain in fact as well as in name directly responsible to him, thwart it he will, and the task would be beyond the power of any Commission.

(Signed) VINCENT CAILLARD.

Constantinople, January 20, 1897.

No. 78.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 25.)

(No. 53. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 20, 1897.

I HAVE already drawn your Lordship's attention to the present policy of the Turkish Government respecting the introduction of reforms. As soon as they have an inkling of any branch of the Administration being discussed by the meeting of Ambassadors they at once proceed to announce, as if spontaneously, the reforms that the Representatives are likely to propose, or a parody of them, hoping thus to forestall and deprive of their sting the recommendations of the Powers.

In this manner they have appointed, or, at any rate, talked of appointing, a Financial Commission, composed of two Turkish and two European Delegates. It is stated that Mazhar Bey, Turkish Commissioner in the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and M. Rombert, a Swiss engineer, have been named members of this body, but the announcement has not been officially confirmed.

It is also proposed to name four European Inspectors of Gendarmerie for the capital and the provinces. The Porte have telegraphed to their Representatives at Brussels and Berne to inquire if they can find suitable candidates among Belgian and Swiss subjects.

Finally, I have the honour to transmit a translation of the Imperial Iradé of the 17th January ordering the reorganization of the Council of State, "in order to strengthen the basis of this institution by the introduction of reforms compatible with the exigencies of the age."

It is mentioned in the Iradé that Ennis Pasha is named member of the Council, and it was at first thought that this official was the ex-Vali of Diarbekir, who was removed owing to the representations of M. Cambon. The French Embassy protested against the promotion of so notorious a functionary, but were assured, in reply, that the Ennis Pasha in question is not the ex-Vali of Diarbekir, but an ex-Vali of Mamuret-ul-Aziz, who has been living at Constantinople in retirement for some years, but who enjoys considerable influence owing to the Mushir Zeki Pasha of Erzingian having married his daughter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 78.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of January 18, 1897.

THE Turkish press published yesterday an official communication of which the substance is as follows.

A scheme for the reorganization of the Council of State has been adopted by Ministers in Council, and approved by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan. The Regulations at present in force make of this Council an institution of great utility in administrative affairs; nevertheless, it has been deemed expedient to amend these Regulations, in order to strengthen the basis of this institution by the introduction of reforms compatible with the exigencies of the age; and at the same time to extend its sphere of action, and enable it to maintain a perfect working order in the public services of the country.

The new scheme of reorganisation provides for the absolute independence of the judicial section of the Council and of the Court of First Instance, as also for the creation of a new section to include the Courts of Appeal and Cassation. As is the case at the Ministry of Justice, this section will be placed under the control and management of the President of the Council of State. As regards the other services, the organisation of the legislative section will not be changed. The internal section will be abolished, and a new section will be created to examine financial questions. Another section, to be known as "administrative," will be formed to reconsider all the more important decisions of the legislative and financial sections. The Chairman of this section will be the President of the Council, and both the administrative and legislative sections will be exclusively composed of members of the present Council.

The details of this scheme of reorganization are as follows: the judicial section of the Council of State and the Court of First Instance will form an absolutely independent section, and will include the Courts of Appeal and Cassation: it will be styled the section of administrative Tribunals, and its President will be the President of the Council of State. The other duties of this body will be divided among the three sections newly created, viz., administrative, financial, and legislative.

The administrative Tribunals will be composed as follows: First Instance: a President and four members; Appeal: a President and six members; Cassation: a President and eight members. The administrative section will consist of eight members, the financial and legislative of six members, and to each a Vice-President will

be appointed. The President of the Council will at the same time be President of all the sections.

In addition to the duties which present Regulations prescribe, the administrative section will be charged with the revision of the decisions of the financial and legislative sections, and more especially in all matters concerning Concessions, Treaties, Laws, &c. It will examine the complaints of officials or private persons against the State Departments, and will communicate the results of its examination to the Grand Vizirate. It will settle all difficulties arising between State Departments, and will consider all questions regarding the application of new or additional taxes.

Special Regulations will be drawn up to define the duties of the Courts of First Instance, Appeal, and Cassation.

No. 79.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, January 25, 1897.*

I REFERRED to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, for their opinion, your Excellency's Secret telegram No. 15 of the 16th instant relative to a proposal of the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, that a new loan should be made to the Turkish Government under the guarantee of the Powers.

Their Lordships have replied that unless some substantial improvement in the administration of Turkey were clearly secured by the loan, there would be no prospect of the proposed arrangement obtaining the approval of Parliament, without whose sanction no guarantee could, of course, be granted.

It would not be worth while to purchase at such a price any concession by which the arbitrary power of the Sultan was not in some material degree diminished.

No. 80.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, January 25, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 51, Confidential, of the 15th instant, I have to observe that the possibility of inducing the British Parliament to sanction the guarantee by Her Majesty's Government of a loan to Turkey depends in the first place on the security to be given for the loan, and in the second place on the advantage to be obtained in return for the guarantee.

Her Majesty's Government require much fuller information on both points than is now in their possession.

According to the Memorandum by Sir V. Caillard, inclosed in your despatch, the consent of the bondholders of the Turkish Debt to the proposed new loan is to be obtained by giving the guarantee of the Powers that the revenues assigned to the bondholders will not be alienated; by securing the payment of the Eastern Roumelian tribute to Turkey; and by making foreigners liable to pay taxes from which they are at present exempted. The prospect of securing the fulfilment of these contingencies appears to Her Majesty's Government to be precarious.

Sir V. Caillard, moreover, intimates that if any substantial improvement of the present situation is to be attained, a much larger loan will be required, for which no apparent security is suggested.

This financial prospect will hardly satisfy Parliament, unless very palpable political advantages are to be gained by agreeing to the loan. Her Majesty's Government have no information in regard to these advantages, but it seems to be a *sine qua non* that the arbitrary power of the Sultan shall be substantially reduced. The statement that the loan will save the Turkish Empire will not be sufficient. A large number of persons in this country have no wish to preserve the Turkish Empire, and their views cannot be overborne or disregarded, unless Her Majesty's Government can show that it is being saved with a reasonable prospect of good and just administration.

No. 81.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, January 26, 1897.*

I HAVE been informed by the Swiss Minister that a request has been addressed to his Government by that of Turkey for the services of a Swiss financier and of Swiss officers to reorganize the Turkish Gendarmerie.

The Swiss Government ask for the opinion of Her Majesty's Government as to the reply they should return to this application, as they are anxious to avoid any step which might interfere with the measures of reform now being discussed by the Great Powers.

I shall be obliged if your Excellency can ascertain and report to me the views of the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople in this matter.

No. 82.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 21. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 26, 1897, 11·45 P.M.*

THE Ambassadors held meetings on the 23rd and again yesterday, at which they discussed the details of the proposed Commissions for the provinces, but I am not yet able to report on the plans proposed, as they have not taken a sufficiently definite shape.

No. 83.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 26. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 24, 1897.*

AT a Court ball last night the Emperor again spoke to me of affairs at Constantinople and, in reply to a remark I made, that the general aspect there had seemed quieter of late, observed that at any rate a critical date—His Majesty no doubt alluded to the celebration of the Sultan's birthday—had passed over without disturbance.

Not, the Emperor went on to say, that the Ambassadors were unprepared for an emergency. The guards from the "stationnaires" had been doubled at the several Embassies, and the vessels themselves were under steam and ready to take up their positions at a moment's notice. In fact, said His Majesty, he had heard with no little surprise that it had been arranged by Baron Calice that the Austro-Hungarian "stationnaire" should, with its Russian consort, place itself immediately in line with Yildiz, and it was further settled that at the smallest signal or symptom of anything like a massacre both vessels should fire a gun in the direction of the Imperial quarters, the first shot, observed the Emperor with great emphasis, to be delivered by the Russian gun-boat, the Austrian immediately following suit. His Majesty laid much stress on the entirely unexpected part which a ship under Russian colours was to take in the programme agreed upon. He could not say what had been arranged with respect to the remaining "stationnaires."

In thanking the Emperor for the very interesting piece of information he had been pleased to communicate to me, I observed that it was to be hoped it might have been allowed to reach Yildiz, where it could not but produce a salutary effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 84.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 40 A.) *Foreign Office, January 28, 1897.*

Sir,

YESTERDAY the Turkish Ambassador brought me a message from His Imperial Majesty, inquiring as to the course of the Ambassadors' consultations, and expressing a hope that, as far as Great Britain was concerned, Her Majesty's Government would put a stop to these deliberations, inasmuch as the Sultan himself was willing to grant every necessary reform, and to see it faithfully carried out. At the same time he was directed to ask me my personal opinion as to the points on which, in my judgment, reform was most required in the present system of government in Turkey. I replied that it was impossible for me to acquaint him with the course of the deliberations of the Ambassadors at Constantinople. I was not very fully informed of them myself, and whatever had come to my knowledge was communicated to me under the seal of the strictest secrecy. I was unable to hold out any hopes that I should be in a position to accede to his request, that the participation of Great Britain in the consultations at Constantinople should be brought to a close on the faith of the Sultan's assurance that he was prepared to carry out every reform himself. Her Majesty's Government was bound to her allies, and could not take any action which would separate her from the common course on which in pursuit of their united policy they had entered. In reply to his question as to my own personal view of the point in the administration of the Ottoman Empire where reform is most needed, I said I thought it was not very difficult to give a reply. The one thing which was necessary above all other things was a diminution of the extreme arbitrary power of the Sultan, and until in some degree that object had been effected I did not anticipate any very valuable result from the various changes in Ottoman law that had been proposed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 85.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 24.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, January 28, 1897, 8·30 P.M.*

I HAVE received a message from the Porte, saying that the Sultan intends to send a Commission to Anatolia to see if the reforms have been executed, and inviting me, as well as Russian and French Ambassadors, to appoint Delegates to accompany it. In reply, we said we would ask for instructions, and we have agreed to recommend the following formula to our Governments:—

"Her Majesty's Government consider that, while deliberations of Ambassadors are proceeding, it would be undesirable to entertain any isolated proposals, but they take act of the Sultan's intention to send a Commission to Anatolia to inquire into the execution of reforms."

No. 86.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 29.)

(No 26. Secret.)
(Telegraphic). P. *Constantinople, January 29, 1897, 12·30 P.M.*

YESTERDAY, at Ambassadors' meeting, the draft of the proposed arrangement for European and Asiatic Commissions was agreed upon. The financial arrangement was then discussed. I am endeavouring to strengthen the international control, and I hope that at our next meeting, which takes place to-morrow, proposals will be modified in that direction.

No. 87.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, January 29, 1897.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 24 of the 28th instant, reporting that the Porte has invited your Excellency, as well as the French and Russian Ambassadors, to appoint Delegates to accompany the Commission charged with inquiring into the execution of the reforms in Anatolia.

The answer which your Excellency, in concert with your French and Russian colleagues, proposes to return to this communication, is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 88.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 56. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Paris, January 29, 1897.*

YOUR Lordship will have remarked, in my recent correspondence, that M. Hanotaux has more than once laid stress, in conversing with me, on the absolutely free hand which he leaves to M. Cambon in regard to the programme of reforms now being discussed by the Representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople, and that he even goes the length of saying that he has requested the French Ambassador not to trouble him by reporting the details of these negotiations.

Although M. Hanotaux has not said so to me, I have this day learned from one of my colleagues that his Excellency has no confidence whatever in any outcome from this project. I conclude, therefore, that he "disinterests" himself from the discussion very much because he is determined to leave the entire responsibility of the results on the shoulders of others.

My informant, who shares M. Hanotaux' want of confidence in any good result, and who is of opinion that the Ambassadors should have contented themselves with a much more simple programme, is Ambassador of one of the Powers comprised in the Triple Alliance, and I have every reason to believe that his views are identical with those of the Ambassadors who represent the other two.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 89.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 15. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, January 24, 1897.*

I CALLED upon M. Witte, the Minister of Finance, two days ago, with regard to some pending questions directly concerning this Department, and as soon as the matters in hand were discussed he turned abruptly to speak of the political situation in the East.

He said that he did not understand the drift of British policy at Constantinople, which he thought was calculated to end by causing serious complications, owing to the excessive sympathy shown towards the Armenians. He was very sorry for them, but he frankly avowed that, notwithstanding this, he preferred to see 5,000, or 500,000, Armenians persecuted to risking the danger of a European war and its still greater evils. The Sultan was not a free agent. He was obliged to consult the feelings of his Mahommedan subjects, and if he ran counter to them he would be certainly assassinated. England did not seem to him to make sufficient allowance for the position in which the Sultan was placed, and he thought the demands of the Ambassadors should be restrained by their Governments, and only such pressure brought to bear as was possible without creating a still worse condition of affairs.

His own views on the foreign policy of Russia were very simple. He did not desire a foot more of territory, for they already had more than they could possibly develop in a

hundred or two hundred years. What they wanted was peace to bring out the wealth of the country, foster trade, commerce, and industry, improve the status of the people, and make them in course of time self-sufficing. He looked upon the old school who wanted the extension of Russia to the shores of the Bosphorus as effete and done with. They had no longer any influence, and their spokesman, Count Ignatiew, was discredited. All this had come about in the reign of the late peace-loving Emperor Alexander III, and he believed the present Emperor would follow the same path.

He saw no reason why Russia and England should not come to a friendly understanding with regard to their respective spheres of influence. It would be easy to explain what Russia wanted, for it was nothing more than what he had just told me, but the understanding ought to be a concrete one, and for his part he would welcome any steps in this direction. He was not a politician in the common sense of the word, but the Minister of Finance of a great country could not be indifferent to politics, and he would be honest and say that no one would expect greater advantages from a close understanding between our two countries than the Minister of Finance.

Taking up some remarks I had made respecting the unfriendly tone of the Russian press, M. Witte said I need not attach much importance to these utterances.

It was quite true that they had no Parliament, no County Councils, no public meetings as we had in England, and that the political education of the people was formed in a great measure by the press. But, on the other hand, he doubted if 100,000 persons in all Russia read the newspapers or took any special interest in politics, more especially concerning foreign countries. He himself had for a long time been roundly attacked by the press, but it did not prevent his success, nor cause him the slightest annoyance, for he knew how little importance the press possessed throughout the country. He knew it was different in England, where the press was often the organ of a strong public opinion, of which every Government had to take count.

He ended by saying that he was glad to have had this opportunity of talking to me, and that he could promise that if I would come and see him occasionally, he would always speak his mind frankly and honestly.

I confined myself to disabusing his mind as far as I could of the idea that Her Majesty's Government were actuated by any sinister designs in the efforts to prevent a repetition of the horrible Armenian massacres, and to promote a better condition of affairs at Constantinople, and to such remarks as I thought calculated to elicit his opinion on the subject which he had himself initiated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 90.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 1.)

(No. 26. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, January* 29, 1897.

BARON VON MARSCHALL informed me this morning that the Turkish Ambassador had communicated to him a few days ago a telegram from the Porte, to the effect that the Sultan had been informed that the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople were holding frequent meetings for the purpose of discussing the means of improving the administration of the Turkish Empire. His Majesty had been unable to discover the nature of the deliberations of the Ambassadors, who had resolved to maintain absolute secrecy with regard to them, but their meetings were producing a bad impression at Constantinople, and His Majesty requested that they might be instructed to discontinue them, more especially as they were no longer necessary, His Majesty himself having already adopted all the necessary measures for the improvement of the administration.

Baron von Marschall added that Galib Bey had been informed that the German Government were unable to divulge the nature of the deliberations of the Ambassadors, which were not yet concluded, but that His Imperial Majesty might be assured that their object was to devise some means of maintaining the integrity of the Turkish Empire, and consequently of strengthening the position of the Sultan himself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 91.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 42.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 1, 1897.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me by appointment to inform me that he had conveyed my reply to him of Wednesday last to His Imperial Majesty, and that His Majesty had received the communication graciously. But he was very anxious that as soon as I had any knowledge of the designs of the Ambassadors, that I should communicate them confidentially to him, the Turkish Ambassador, in order that in strict secrecy they might be conveyed to his master, and legislative effect might be given to them at the suggestion and under the protection of England.

I said that it was not possible that I should concur in this part of his project; but I had no objection to inform him of the result of the Ambassadors' consultations as soon as the obligation to secrecy was removed, and I was free to speak openly on the subject.

He asked whether he might know of the result of the Ambassadors' consultations before they were presented in the form of a demand to the Sultan.

I said that that would probably be the case, because, after the Ambassadors had come to an agreement, it would be necessary that the several Courts should come to an agreement also before any communication could be made to His Majesty, and the subject-matter of such consultation among the Cabinets could hardly fail to become known to His Imperial Majesty. Nor did I imagine that there would be any objection to my talking it over with him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 92.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 2, 1897.

THE Italian Ambassador called at the Foreign Office on the 27th ultimo, and stated that the Turkish Ambassador at Rome had made a verbal communication to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that the Sublime Porte wished for the cessation of the meetings of the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople to discuss the measures of reform which should be introduced into the administration of the Ottoman Empire.

The Marquis Visconti-Venosta had replied that the Great Powers had agreed to charge their Ambassadors at Constantinople with the task of examining what measures and what reforms should be proposed to the Sublime Porte for the improvement of the condition of the Empire, and for insuring the preservation of order, and he could only earnestly beg the Ottoman Government to await with confidence and to receive in due course the proposals which the Powers would not fail to communicate to them. He at the same time begged that the Sublime Porte would reflect on the grave consequences to which the Ottoman Government would expose themselves if they did not listen to the unanimous advice of Europe.

General Ferrero inquired whether a similar communication had been made to Her Majesty's Government by the Turkish Ambassador at this Court, and, if so, what reply had been returned to it.

I have informed his Excellency that the Turkish Ambassador spoke to me in the same sense in an interview later in the afternoon, and that I had replied that the Six Powers were acting in accord, and that I could not undertake to give any separate reply to such a communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 93.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February 3.*)

(No. 40.)

Constantinople, January 16, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the seizure for taxes of the cattle distributed by the Red Cross Society.

I am making representations to the Porte on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 93.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 66.)

Kharput, December 29, 1896.

Sir,

AS reported in my despatch to your Excellency No. 55 of the 11th ultimo, cattle distributed through the Red Cross emissaries among the Armenians of the Aghin villages, all of which were looted during the disturbances, were then rumoured to have been seized by the zaptiehs in lieu of taxes. A few days ago I learnt upon good authority here that Marcar Jamjichian, a leading Armenian of the village of Mashkir, who had been intrusted by the Red Cross delegates with the distribution of cattle in the district referred to, had been badly beaten by two zaptiehs whilst he was endeavouring to oppose them in their illegal confiscation of the villagers' sheep and goats.

I at once brought the matter to the notice of the Vali, who telegraphed stringent orders to the Kaïmakam of Eghin to immediately stop the seizure of cattle if there had been any such seizure, and to investigate the circumstances under which Marcar had been ill-treated by the collectors.

Three days later the Armenian in question was sent on by the Eghin authorities to Kharput, accompanied by one of the zaptiehs who had beaten him, and who is now under arrest. Marcar Jamjichian called upon me a day or two ago, and furnished me with the details comprised in the list herewith inclosed, as to the persons from whom Red Cross animals had been taken by force in three of the Aghin villages, and he promised to furnish me with further information with regard to similar abuses committed by zaptiehs in the other villages, all of which, he assured me, had suffered in the same way.

Jamjichian is well known to the American mission here and bears a high character among the Armenians of his own district.

I have had a long conversation with the Vali upon the subject, and have handed him a translation in Turkish of the inclosure to this despatch. Raouf Bey promises to do all in his power to have the matter carefully investigated and to insure the return of the cattle to their rightful owners.

Marcar, however, informs me that the animals were, for the most part, immediately slaughtered by the Turkish peasants, who purchased them from the zaptiehs, and that their restoration to their Armenian owners would be, therefore, in most instances, impracticable.

I shall not fail to report to your Excellency the result of the inquiry now being prosecuted at the Vali's orders.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 93.

List of Armenians of the Aghin Villages from whom Cattle given by American charity for Relief purposes was seized by force and sold by Zaptiehs for taxes.

THE person chiefly responsible in the matter was the Mukhtar of Mashkir, an Armenian named Der Manuel Oglou Osep. The zaptiehs concerned in the seizure and and sale in question were, Mehmed Ombashi, Suleiman Effendi, Riza Effendi, and the adopted son of Mehmed Ali Chaush.

MASHKIR VILLAGE.

Names.	Cattle taken.		
	Cows.	Sheep.	Goats.
Magdesi	1	..	..
Gasparin Mariam		2	..
Serpek Bedros	..	..	2
Zornaji's daughters	..	..	1
Tatiosoglou Serkis	..	..	1
Bolo Serkis	..	2	1
Monsur Tatipan	..	..	2
Odalar Agob	..	..	1
Duzoglou Mardiros	..	..	2
Martig Arotiun	..	..	2
Torik Minas	..	..	1
Toro Varo	..	..	1
Agnain Elmas	..	..	

SAMOGA VILLAGE.

Names.	Cattle taken.		
	Cows.	Sheep.	Goats.
Khalemker Horosmun	..	..	2
Derbagdasar's daughter	..	..	2
Tashji Mugherditch	..	..	1
Khanik Juhar	..	..	1

VAHSHIN VILLAGE.

Names.	Cattle taken.	
	Oxen.	Goats.
Nazar Oglou Kirkor	1	..
Gazarian Artin	..	1

180 piastres relief money were forcibly taken from Zewal Oglou Agob through the instrumentality of the same Mukhtar.

No. 94.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February 3.*)

(No. 56.)
Constantinople, January 26, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 40 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, contradicting the alleged seizure of cattle distributed by the Red Cross Society.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)
Kharput, January 4, 1897.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 66 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that, according to a telegram received from the Kaïmakam of Eghin, and shown to me by the Vali to-day, the only one of the animals distributed among the Aghin villagers by the Red Cross delegates which has been sold for taxes was a goat which was seized by mistake.

Although naturally relieved by this welcome intelligence, Raouf Bey has consented to forward a translation of the list forming inclosures to the despatch in question to the Eghin authorities, and has instructed them to investigate and report upon the authenticity of the statements therein set forth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 95.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February 3.*)

(No. 58.)
Constantinople, January 26, 1897.

My Lord,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 6 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a further list, based on despatches and telegrams received from Her Majesty's Consular officers, of prisoners released in the provinces under the general amnesty, together with despatches which I have received bearing on the same subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 95.

List of Prisoners released in the Provinces under the General Amnesty.

Aleppo.—141 Armenians released, including those at Alexandretta (3), at Urfa (5), and at Marash.

There are still 11 prisoners at Urfa who were under sentence of death.

Beirout.—18 remain in prison at Tripoli under sentence for various offences at common law, apparently unconnected with the disturbances.

Bitlis.—5 remaining Armenians released.

Diarbekir.—Some Armenian prisoners remain at Bakir Madin; only two of these are political, and as they were condemned four or five years ago, the Vali has applied to Constantinople for instructions.

Angora.—10 remaining prisoners at Yuzgat released; 12 had been exiled—5 to Adana and 7 to Rhodes.

Erzeroum.—10 more released.

There now remain there in prison:—

7 Narman prisoners.
7 inhabitants of Deli Baba accused of murder at Alashgerd.
4 Armenians of Khinis under sentence of death for murder.
1 alleged revolutionary agitator accused of murder.
1 old woman accused of causing death.

Smyrna.—7 political prisoners released at Rhodes, but still obliged to reside in the island.

Trebizond.—24 more released at Trebizond and Samsoun.

Inclosure 2 in No. 95.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)
Angora, January 20, 1897.

Sir,

IN my telegrams to your Excellency of the 3rd and 12th instant respectively, I had the honour to report to the effect that, as a result of the general amnesty in this vilayet, thirty-eight Armenians out of the thirty-nine detained at Yuzgat, Cæsarea, and Angora respectively had been liberated, and that fifty-six out of the fifty-seven Mussulmans arrested in connection with recent disturbances had similarly profited by the amnesty in question.

The details concerning the arrest of nine of the twenty-two Yuzgat Armenian prisoners (among whom Avedis Maksoumian), referred to in my above-mentioned telegrams, were reported to your Excellency by Mr. Acting-Consul Richards in his despatches Nos. 96 and 128 of the 7th October and 18th December last respectively; and if the allegations made against Maksoumian and his companions of endeavouring to raise a troop of horse were well founded, they must be considered to have been very fortunate in escaping a long term of imprisonment. An effort was, in fact, made by the Criminal Court at Yuzgat to except these men from the operation of the general amnesty under the contention that they had not yet been tried, and that its provisions therefore could not be applicable to them. This objection, however, was—owing chiefly, I understand, to the action of the Vali Tewfik Pasha—overruled, and the prisoners after some delay set free. The remaining thirteen of the twenty-two Yuzgat prisoners would appear to have been arrested on suspicion of being connected with a revolutionary propaganda.

Of the Armenians originally arrested in connection with the disturbances at Yuzgat in the years 1892 and 1893 none remained under detention at the latter place at the time of the proclamation of the amnesty of the last twelve, as reported by Mr. Richards in his despatch to Mr. Herbert, No. 67 of the 6th August, 1896, having been liberated in July last. As your Excellency is aware certain of the Armenians connected with the disturbances referred to were executed at Angora and Yuzgat, while some were sent finally to Adana and Rhodes. I inclose herewith a list of these latter for purposes of reference.

As regards the twenty-seven Armenian prisoners at Cæsarea (twenty-six of whom as reported by me to your Excellency in my telegram above referred to have been released), twenty-five, as far as I have been able to learn, were under detention as suspects, whereas two, Harutin Shavarsh and Hatcher Pappasian, had been condemned by the Cæsarea Court of Appeal sitting in January of last year, the first to death, and the second to three years' imprisonment, for their alleged participation in the disturbances at Cæsarea in December, 1895. Hatcher Pappasian has now been released, while Harutin Chavarsh, having been condemned to death, has been excepted from the pardon conferred by the amnesty, and is still in prison at Cæsarea. With regard to the five other Armenians tried together with Shavarsh and Pappasian for alleged complicity in the same disturbances, a list of whom was forwarded to this Consulate by Mr. Herbert in his despatch of the 31st July last, I find, on reference to Mr. Richards' despatches to Mr. Herbert and your Excellency, Nos. 69 and 83 of the 10th August and the 17th September last respectively, that two, Agop and Mihran, were acquitted, that Garabed was released after a short term of imprisonment, and that Hammal Agop and Ohannes Kazandjian, both of whom were condemned to death, had escaped the latter owing to a successful appeal to the venality of certain Turkish officials. The case of these five men

was very fully reported to your Excellency and Mr. Herbert by Mr. Richards in his despatches Nos. 27, 44, and 57 of the 19th March, 28th May, and 16th July of last year respectively.

The Armenian referred to in my telegram to your Excellency of the 3rd instant as having been released at Angora was a certain Hadji Serbsoghloh, native of Mirzé, a village in the vicinity of Caesarea. He had been in prison here for about a year and a-half past on the accusation apparently of having been acquainted with the Armenians concerned in the attack on the Osmandjik (Tchorum Sandjak) post as far back as the autumn of 1892, referred to by Mr. Richards in his despatch to Mr. Herbert No. 65 of the 3rd August last.

With regard to the fifty-seven Mussulmans referred to by me in my telegram of the 3rd January, all, I learn, have now been released. Of these, twenty-seven were detained at Caesarea—seven for their connection with the disturbances in that town in December 1895, and twenty for the more recent affair at Everek, which was reported by Mr. Richards in his despatch to your Excellency No. 117 of the 30th November, 1896.

Of the remaining thirty Mussulmans released, seventeen had been under detention at Yuzgat, and thirteen at Angora—the latter for their connection with the disturbances in this town of the 18th September, 1896, reported to your Excellency by Mr. Richards in his despatch No. 87 of the 21st September of that year.

I have to add that Mr. Vice-Consul Kenn has informed me that, although there are certain political exiles at Komeh, there were no Armenians actually under detention at the time of the proclamation of the amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 95.

List of Armenians Exiled to Adana and Rhodes for connection with Yuzgat Disturbances, 1892–93.

Name.	Nature of Charge.	Sentence.	Remarks.	Reference.
1. Manik Oghlou Artin 2. Sari Choban Oghlou Derbab 3. Keshish Oghlou Migherditch 4. Djendjem Oghlou Agob 5. Simon Oghlou Artin Kelaya	Complicity with Revolutionary Committees, and attempt to rescue prisoners, 1893	15 years' imprisonment	Sent to Adana	Mr. Richards' No. 67 of the 6th August, 1896, to Her Majesty's Embassy. Mr. Herbert's despatch to Mr. Richards of the 15th June, 1896.
1. Dr. Diran Sunni 2. Serope Eritnian 3. Debbagh Margoss	Complicity in troubles at Yuzgat, December 1893	Death	Exiled to Rhodes.	
4. Toros Aghanian 5. Mihran Ohannesian	Murder of Simon Kishin, of Mazar Oghlou village	,,	,,	Mr. Richards' No. 49 of the 19th June, 1896, to Her Majesty's Embassy.
6. Setrak Topal Toronian 7. Kirkor Santonian	Rescue of murderers of Simon	,,	,,	Mr. Fontana's No. 58 of the 5th October, 1895, to Her Majesty's Embassy.

Inclosure 4 in No. 95.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)

Erzeroum, January 1, 1897.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 127 of the 28th December, I have the honour to report that, on the 29th ultimo, ten more Armenian prisoners were set at liberty. These men were all inhabitants of Erzinghian, and had belonged to a band of revolutionaries which made its appearance in the Kematih district shortly before the massacres of October 1895.

There still remain in custody at Erzeroum:—

1. The seven Narman prisoners under sentence of death referred to in my despatch No. 120 of the 26th November, 1896, who are now treated as non-political offenders.

2. Seven inhabitants of Deli-Baba, the political charges against whom have been withdrawn, and who are accused of the murder of a Persian camel-driver in Alashgerd. There is very strong reason to believe that this charge was trumped up against them by certain of their Kurdish neighbours, with whom they were on bad terms.

3. Four Armenians of Khinis under sentence of death for the murder of the Kurdish Sheikh Haidar.

4. Aram Aramian, of Erzeroum, a revolutionary agitator, who is accused of the murder of an Armenian at Erzeroum some six years ago.

5. Hadji Khanoum, an old Armenian woman of Petieridj, in the Terdjan Caza, accused of causing the death of a Mussulman, whom she is said to have struck or kicked while he was taking part in the plundering of her village.

There are also a number of the Armoudan prisoners still in custody at Erzinghian, about whom I hope to report when I have received fuller information.

A number of Mussulman prisoners have also been released at Erzeroum, including two—the only two—who were condemned to terms of imprisonment for isolated murders of Armenians shortly after the massacres. In common fairness, it would seem that Armenians similarly circumstanced should receive similar treatment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 5 in No. 95.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)

Trebizond, January 3, 1897.

Sir,

I DULY received your Excellency's telegram of the 23rd ultimo, worded thus:—

"Amnesty has been issued granting pardon to Armenian prisoners except those under sentence of death and notorious agitators. Report result by telegraph."

Your Excellency will have been informed by my cyphered telegram of the 25th ultimo that fourteen of the seventeen Armenian political prisoners were released here on that day, and that, as regards the three detained in prison, the Vali had wired to ask whether they should be also set free, considering that, although sentenced by court-martial to death at Trebizond, their condemnation has not yet been affirmed by the Revisionary Court at Constantinople. Cadri Bey has since received an answer to the effect that his suggestion is under consideration. He will, however, telegraph again requesting more urgently for a decision, so that they may not pass their approaching festive season in gaol. The names of the prisoners are the priest Der Vahan Khozian, Hagop Kahvedjian, and Armenag Kasparian, the first and second of whom are charged with having fired on the troops during the massacre, and the third with having been the assailant of Bahri Pasha.

A list of the Armenians arrested in consequence of the Trebizond disturbances will be found in my despatch of the 16th December, 1895. They numbered in all thirty-five, of which, besides those now amnestied, and the eleven released though tardily as innocent, one (No. 5) was removed to the prison of Erzinghian, and seven (Nos. 3, 13, 16, 17, 18, 26, and 27) were deported latterly, as mentioned in my despatch of the 16th November, 1896.

Our Consular Agent at Samsoun has furnished me the names of twenty-nine Armenians as amnestied on the 26th ultimo, five of whom only had the Vali or myself any knowledge of being in custody. The majority of them must, therefore, have been quite recently arrested.

Two Turks were also pardoned there and four here, the latter having been imprisoned a few months ago for having aggressively cut down trees belonging to Armenians.

The act of clemency vouchsafed by the Sultan to his Armenian subjects is favourably viewed and criticized at Trebizond by Moslems as well as Christians. It is commented upon as a step in the right direction tending towards conciliation, which has brought at last a little joy into many an unhappy home.

None of the Armenians so released here, after fifteen months' confinement, have hesitated to take the required oath of allegiance, and they will no doubt comply with the commands of their Sovereign by allowing themselves to be photographed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 6 in No. 95.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)

Diarbekir, January 5, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of the 2nd instant, reporting the result of the amnesty in this vilayet.

All the political prisoners were released here the same day. There were four Armenians and nineteen Mussulmans; amongst the latter the men who were being prosecuted by the agent of M. Zollinger, German Consul at Aleppo, for seizing his sheep.

Outside the capital of the vilayet there were three prisoners at Mardin, the Protestant pastor and two companions. As they were accused of having in their possession compromising documents it was thought doubtful whether the amnesty could be extended to them, and the matter was referred to Constantinople. The reply was favourable, and they were released on the 30th December.

There remain some prisoners at Bakir Maden. The Vali informs me that only two of them are political, and that, as they were condemned some four or five years ago, he has referred their case to Constantinople.

It is unfortunate that the amnesty has been followed here by a revival of uneasy feeling and rumours among the Christians population—such as have not been known for the last two or three months—which even drove some of the most timid to close their shops last Friday.

The grounds given for this uneasiness do not seem to me to bear examination; but it shows that the feeling of security is still far from being firmly established.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

Inclosure 7 in No. 95.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1.)

Smyrna, January 5, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward copy of a despatch received from Acting Vice-Consul Biliotti, reporting the release on the 30th December of the seven Armenian prisoners mentioned in my despatch No. 135 of the 29th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 8 in No. 95.

Acting Vice-Consul Biliotti to Consul Cumberbatch.

(No. 26.)

Rhodes, December 30, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 25, Confidential, of the 24th instant, respecting the seven Armenian political prisoners, I have the honour to report that, in accordance with telegraphic instructions received from the capital, these seven prisoners have been released this morning from the central prison (Zindan).

According to the information I have had from his Excellency the Vali himself, although set at liberty, these prisoners are obliged to reside inside the fortified town, and are not allowed to go outside the gates. They will be free to choose any occupation they like, as tradesmen, shopkeepers, &c., in the bazaar (which is situated inside the fortified town); but for the night a zaptieh will be placed outside the house they will occupy, a measure which, since the escape of Ahmed Bey and his companions, has been adopted for all those exiled here with residence in the interior of the fortified town.

The Vali added that these Armenians will have to take the oath of allegiance to the Government: as, however, there is no Armenian priest here, he has asked the Sublime Porte whether this oath may be administered by the Greek Archbishop, and awaits instructions to this effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. BILIOTTI.

No. 96.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 59.)
My Lord, *Pera, January 26, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 53, Confidential, of the 20th January, in which I mentioned the proposed reorganization of the Council of State, I have the honour to report that an announcement appeared in the official Gazette of the 22nd instant raising the number of members of the administrative section from eight to fourteen, including the President.

The names of the newly-appointed members are:—
Alexander Carathéodori Pasha, ex-Vali of Crete.
Turkan Pasha, ex-Vali of Crete.
Artin Pasha, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.
Zia Pasha, ex-Ambassador at Paris.
Akif Effendi, Vice-President of the Financial Section.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 97.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 60.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 27, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, respecting the persecutions to which the Hauran Druses are exposed at the hands of the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 97.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Beirout, January 22, 1897.*

WITH reference to the recent Hauran campaign and its results, I have the honour to report that, from information received from a reliable Lebanon source, it appears that after the arrival of the military Commander, Abdullah Pasha, 8,000 Druses retreated to the districts of Safa, Azrak, and the Ledja. About 4,000 remained in the Hauran and tendered their submission to the Government; but 2,000 of these have been since exiled or forcibly enlisted for military service.

Tranquillity, it was added, now prevails in the Hauran; but the former inhabitants, fearing arrest in the event of their returning to their homes, still remain in hiding.

Complaints are made by the Druses of Hasbeya and Mejdel Shems of the pressure brought to bear upon them by the military authorities with the view of compelling the able-bodied men to enlist, and the Sheikhs of Khalwat-el-Biadah in that neighbourhood, being harassed on this account, have taken refuge in the Shouf, where the local authorities are endeavouring to arrest and send them back to Hasbeya.

Sheikh Hamad-el-Kais, the spiritual Head of the Druses in that district, who was imprisoned on account of the escape of his son to avoid enlistment, is still detained.

I beg to state that the action of the authorities cannot but tend to irritate the minds of the Druses and to embitter still further the feelings of rancour left by the recent campaign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 98.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 61. Secret.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 28, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 51 of the 20th January, I have the honour to inclose a further Memorandum by Sir V. Caillard on the arrangement for the reform of the finances of Turkey which is advocated by the French Ambassador, with whom he has, at my request, had several interviews. He agrees with M. Cambon that if the loan, which appears to be indispensable, is raised under the guarantee of the Powers, with the stipulation that their Delegates shall supervise the expenditure of it, practical European control of the entire finances will in a short time grow out of the arrangement.

I do not myself altogether share this view, nor do I believe that the Turkish Government, however much they may be in need of money, will willingly accept a loan under such conditions.

I prefer M. Nélidow's proposal (reported in my telegram No. 12 of the 13th January), by which a permanent Mixed Commission, composed of Ottoman and European members in equal numbers (the latter to be named or accepted by the Powers), will be appointed to study the financial situation of Turkey, to prepare a genuine Budget, and to supervise and verify ("contrôler") its execution.

Such a Commission would certainly not be accepted by the Sultan without pressure, but the same may be said of all the reforms that the Powers will propose, and if a Commission, really backed by the six Governments, was once solidly established, there would probably be no difficulty in obtaining a loan even without a guarantee.

I expressed these views at the meeting held on the 14th January, and M. Nélidow's proposal, which I have quoted above, was partly the result of them, but the French Ambassador, who specially interests himself in the question, is working (as shown in Sir V. Caillard's Memorandum) on different lines, and proposes to base the establishment of a Control on the right of supervision of a new loan, which the Powers would acquire by giving their guarantee.

At the same time he insists that, by adopting one of the formulas given in Sir V. Caillard's Memorandum, no pecuniary liability would be incurred by the Powers.

Before this despatch reaches your Lordship I hope to be able to report by telegraph the result of the further discussion of the subject by the Ambassadors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 98.

Memorandum by Sir V. Caillard.

IT is believed that possibly some of the European Governments might object to engaging their pecuniary responsibility to guarantee a Turkish loan, even when so well secured as that described in my Memorandum of the 20th January last, and that this might be a fatal obstacle to an agreement among the Powers on the matter of that loan. To provide funds for establishing Turkish finances on a sound basis, though essential to the solution of the whole Turkish question, is not the main object of the loan in view; the chief purpose for which it is suggested is to introduce an effective European control over Turkish administration generally. It would, therefore,

be extremely to be regretted if so practical a proposal were to fall through owing to difficulties in the way of a collective guarantee.

To overcome these difficulties a method has been searched for by which the form of a collective guarantee might be preserved while relieving the Powers of the pecuniary responsibility which some may be reluctant to assume. It is now suggested that, instead of giving their direct guarantee for the service of the interest and sinking fund of the loan, the Powers should limit their guarantee to the assurance that the amount affected to its service should have the privileged position described in my first Memorandum, and should never be applied to any other purpose. This guarantee might be formulated as follows:—

"The Great Powers guarantee that the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt will apply to the service of the loan the entire resources now assigned to the Extraordinary Sinking Fund, and that those resources shall not be affected to any other purpose."

This, on the face of it, involves no pecuniary guarantee; it appears to be a "moral guarantee" only. The question which has to be considered is whether circumstances might arise under which the Powers would be morally obliged to transform their moral guarantee into a pecuniary guarantee; that is to say, should the service of the loan be under any given circumstances suspended, would the Powers be under the moral obligation of providing for it?

There seems to be only two contingences under which the service of the loan could be suspended:—

1. Its suspension by the Ottoman Public Debt Council itself;

2. The seizure by the Turkish Government of the whole of the revenues ceded to the bondholders under the Decree of Mouharrem, including the rent of the tobacco monopoly.

The first hypothesis may be considered, I think, as entirely out of the question. Although the Delegates to the Public Debt Council are not directly named by their respective Governments, that Council is really international. With the single exception of Russia, it is formed by members bearing the nationality respectively of every one of the Great Powers. As a matter of fact, the German Delegate, though in form named by the "German Syndicate," is named by the German Government, while the other Governments, except the English, take a direct part in the nomination of the other Delegates in accord with the "Syndicates," in whose hands the nomination is left.* It is thus out of the question that a Council so composed should act in direct contradiction to the express instructions of the Great Powers, *à fortiori*, instructions which have taken the form of a solemn public guarantee.

Moreover, the affectation of the resources specified to the service of the new loan will entail a modification of the Decree of Mouharrem, to which the present bondholders must expressly agree, and which must be confirmed by Imperial Iradé. When these formalities have been complied with, the modified Decree of Mouharrem becomes the law which the Council is appointed to administer. By infringing it or acting in any other manner than that prescribed by its provisions the Council would be absolutely exceeding its powers. Thus, from whatever point of view the position of the Council be regarded, it is certain that, so long as it exists, the guarantee of the Powers would remain unquestioned and intact.

The second hypothesis is that the Turkish Government would lay violent hands on the whole of the ceded revenues, and the resources for the service of the loan should thus disappear. As I ventured already to submit in my first Memorandum, this risk forms a part only of the risk of the occurrence of a great catastrophe in the East. To pursue such a course, the Turkish Government would have been reduced to such straits, and the Turkish Empire would have fallen into such desperate circumstances, that a final arrangement would have become indispensable. In connection with this subject, the recent official note of the Russian Ambassador to the Sublime Porte (dated, I believe, the 23rd December) assumes great significance. The first part of this note is couched as follows:—

"L'Ambassadeur de Russie est chargé de déclarer au Gouvernement Ottoman que s'il portait atteinte aux droits du Conseil de la Dette Publique ou touchait aux revenus

* Even the Turkish Delegate is named directly by the Sultan, in form. There being no Turkish "Syndicate" his name is "proposed" to the Sultan by the "Préfecture de la Ville," and the nomination is confirmed by Imperial Iradé. I need scarcely add that the choice is really the Sultan's own. The present Turkish Delegate, Hamdy Bey, is a man of advanced views and eagerly anxious for reforms. This is not unknown to the Sultan, but Hamdy Bey is a man of European reputation as an antiquarian and Director of the Stamboul Museum, the Sultan, therefore, scarcely dares to touch him. Moreover, Hamdy Bey is prudent enough not to air his views in public.

qui ont été concédés aux porteurs des fonds Turcs, la Russie se verrait obligée de réclamer, à l'égal des autres Puissances, l'institution d'une Commission Financière Internationale, prévue par le Protocole 18 du Congrès de Berlin, et qui serait chargée d'étudier la situation financière de l'Empire Ottoman et la part des revenus qui pourrait être attribuée à ses créanciers."

Thus the Turkish Government already knows officially, through the mouth of the Russian Ambassador, that it cannot interfere with the ceded revenues without immediately calling down upon itself the interference of Europe. In view of this, it is not to be supposed that the ceded revenues would be touched until such a crisis had arisen, either by war or otherwise, that the Powers would be forced to intervene.

Meanwhile the service of the loan would have been suspended. Would the Powers be morally obliged to provide pecuniary means to continue it? I think not. It seems to me that, so far as dealing with the Turkish Government is concerned, and on the supposition that the end of the crisis would still find the Turks in possession, or partial possession, of their present Empire, M. de Nélidow's note defines pretty exactly what the responsibility of the Powers would be in regard to the suggested loan. They had guaranteed that certain resources should be applied to certain ends; the Turks lay violent hands upon the resources, and misapply them; clearly the Powers would be called upon to interfere in order that the resources may be recovered and reapplied as originally stipulated. This goes a little further than the statement of M. de Nélidow, which declares that the Powers would have to determine "la part des revenus qui pourrait être attribuée à ses créanciers," whereas, in the case of the Guaranteed Loan, there could be no question of "quelle part," the *whole* of the service of the loan, as originally calculated, would have to be provided for. Bearing this in mind, M. de Nélidow's note would serve as a definition of the responsibility of the Powers, and I suggest that, at a given moment, it would be advisable that all the Great Powers should associate themselves with Russia in regard to that note, in order that there may be no question as to what their responsibility is. Should the Turks have lost, or partially lost, their Empire, their successors would clearly have to provide wholly, or proportionately, for the service of the loan; and it would be the business of the Great Powers to see that this was done.

If the theory, which I have exposed above, of the responsibility of the Powers be correct, it is evident that that responsibility is not of a pecuniary nature.

As to the present bondholders, I do not think that their position would be less strong under the form of guarantee now proposed than it would have been under the original proposal. In fact, it seems to me to be rather stronger. The annual sum assigned to the service of the new loan is to form, it will be recollected, a second charge (first after the Priority Loan), not on any particular one or two of the ceded revenues, *but on the whole of them*. Thus, if the Turkish Government interfered with *any* part of the ceded revenues the guarantee of the Powers would become active, and they would have to insist upon immediate restitution. This, again, is on the lines of M. de Nélidow's note, delivered before any suggestion of the loan now under discussion was in view. It goes slightly further than that note; but in view of the projected loan, and again in order that responsibilities should be well defined, it would, I submit, be advisable to go that much further. It would not require a very intelligent bondholder to perceive how considerably his present security would be thereby increased.

It is, however, probable that the form of guarantee now proposed would not command so high a price for the loan as the direct pecuniary guarantee. It would, however, nevertheless, I think, be reasonable to suppose that a 4 per Cent. Loan so guaranteed would be taken at par. With a sinking fund, calculated to extinguish the loan in forty years, the cash produced would, under these conditions, amount to £ T. 3,950,000, and if the term for extinction be prolonged to ninety years, £ T. 4,850,000.

The other questions treated in my first Memorandum remain unaffected by the change in the form of guarantee. The right of the Powers to control the expenditure of the loan, the gradual acquirement by the Commission appointed to control it of general financial and administrative power, and the further advantages which the present bondholders would find under the arrangement, need not therefore be again discussed.

(Signed) VINCENT CAILLARD.

Constantinople,
January 26, 1897.

Annex.

SINCE writing my Memorandum of yesterday, another "formula" for the collective guarantee has been suggested, as follows:—

"Les Grandes Puissances garantissent que la Sublime Porte continuera à attribuer à la Dette, dans les conditions actuelles, les ressources nécessaires pour produire la somme de £ T. 200,000 que la Dette s'engage à affecter au service de l'emprunt."

This formula is decidedly clearer and stronger than that previously suggested. The words "dans les conditions actuelles" are essential to the security offered, for they imply the condition that the annuity of £ T. 200,000 must be left as a second charge on the total revenues of the Debt. As to the engagement of the Public Debt Council with which the formula concludes, it is of course necessary to obtain it. I would merely point out that the express consent of the bondholders, as explained in my Memorandum of the 20th January, would be necessary before any such engagement could be taken by the Council. I do not think that the above formula changes in any way the considerations and conclusions which I submitted in my Memorandum of yesterday. It still seems to me that to render the situation perfectly clear, the Great Powers would do well to associate themselves with the declaration made by M. Nélidow to the Sublime Porte in regard to the Public Debt revenues, and I even venture to suggest that it would be opportune to do so by adding the phrase "en s'associant à la déclaration remise par M. Nélidow à la Sublime Porte le 23 Décembre (N. S.), 1896; the formula would then stand thus:—

"Les Grandes Puissances en s'associant à la déclaration remise par M. Nélidow à la Sublime Porte le 23 Décembre (N. S.), 1896, garantissent que la Sublime Porte continuera à attribuer à la Dette, dans les conditions actuelles, les ressources," &c.

In order that there may be no misunderstanding, I beg leave to add the following remarks. The main object of the loan I have been led from the outset to conceive to be the limitation of the power of the Sultan over the finances of the Empire by means of the Commission instituted to control the expenditure of the loan, and the introduction of effective general control over the administration as well as the finances of Turkey by means also of that Commission.

I have been also led to believe that if a direct proposal were made to establish such a Commission, with sufficient powers to exercise the control above described, it would probably not be agreed to by at least one of the Ambassadors, and the endeavour has been, therefore, to conceal the great power of the Commission under cover of the apparently innocent proposal that it should be appointed to control the expenditure of the loan. That a Commission intelligently turning this control to account, with the strong support of the Ambassadors, would ultimately acquire all the power needed, I have no doubt, as I endeavoured to explain in my Memorandum of the 20th January. But that it would be *greatly* preferable for the Commission to be invested, from the beginning, with all the necessary powers, instead of having to acquire them by degrees, is self-evident.

(Signed) VINCENT CAILLARD.

Constantinople, January 27, 1897.

No. 99.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 20. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February 3, 1897, 11·30 A.M.*

AUSTRIAN Ambassador intimated at the meeting yesterday with regard to the situation in Macedonia, that he could not take the responsibility of adhering to the recommendations to be addressed to Turkey if the result of them was liable to be wrecked by a break-up of the Empire, which would be more injurious to Austria than the present state of things. He, therefore, strongly urged the insertion in our Report of a recommendation to our Governments that they should take steps to prevent a rising in Macedonia, by addressing stringent warnings to the Balkan States.

M. de Nélidow objected to dictating measures that should be taken to prevent the

disturbances, on the ground that it would be going beyond our mandate, but he was ready separately to call the attention of his Government to danger of Macedonian rising.

Probably, an identic despatch on the subject in general terms will eventually be agreed upon.

No. 100.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 3.)

(No. 30. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February 3, 1897, 11·45 A.M.*

MEETINGS of the Ambassadors were held on the 1st February and 2nd February, and the draft of our proposals has now been completed, and will be forwarded by to-morrow's messenger.

Owing to instructions from their Governments, the Russian and French Ambassadors have shown an anxiety to expedite proceedings, but our recommendations will not be in their final shape till next week, as the draft is subject to further revision, and the Report which will accompany it is not yet drawn up.

No. 101.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 24. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Brussels, February 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish Minister has been endeavouring to obtain, through the Belgian Government, a Belgian financial expert for service at Constantinople, and some of my colleagues believe that this move has been made without the knowledge of the Ambassadors, and with the view of stealing a march upon them.

In reply to an informal inquiry, M. de Favereau has just told me that the Turkish Minister did take some steps in this direction, but that the Belgian Government had inquired whether the Porte was acting in this matter in concert with the Great Powers, and, as Carathéodori Effendi could not tell them such was the case, they had not yet taken any action in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 102.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. Rumbold.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 5, 1897.*

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called this afternoon and put to me the question whether, when the Ambassadors at Constantinople had agreed on the reforms to be proposed in the Turkish Administration, it would be left to them to discuss the question of applying material pressure if the Sultan resisted the proposals, or whether that was to be a matter for negotiation between the Cabinets.

I replied that, according to the terms of my original Circular, the question of applying material pressure would be a matter for the decision of the Cabinets, and, on the whole, I thought that would be the most convenient arrangement. But it was not a point to which I attached a great importance, and if the Austro-Hungarian Government preferred that the question should be debated and determined by the Ambassadors at Constantinople I was quite willing to assent to that course.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 103.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 6.)

(No. 38. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February 6, 1897, 11·30 A.M.*

AT our meeting yesterday we read over and approved, provisionally, a Report to accompany the plan of reforms. We also drew up an identic despatch to be addressed at the same time to our various Governments, recommending that the Balkan States should be warned not to encourage any insurrectionary movement in Macedonia, which would render useless the plan of reforms, and even endanger the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

No. 104.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 64. Confidential.)
Pera, February 2, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an interesting Report on the condition of the Provinces of Bussorah, Mosul, &c., drawn up by one of the Inspectors of the Public Debt, and forwarded to me by Sir V. Caillard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 104.

Report on the Condition of the Provinces of Bussorah, Mosul, &c.

DANS les campagnes de l'Irak, la question est autre. LÀ, la population, éclaircie partout, est d'une pauvreté dont il est impossible de se faire, de loin, une idée. D'abord nous nous trouvons en présence de l'élément nomade. Tant que le Gouvernement, et il ne paraît pas que la tâche lui soit aisée, ne sera pas parvenu à fixer au sol les tribus nomades, celles-ci s'échapperont toujours à notre contrôle aussi bien qu'elles échappent au sien. La richesse des nomades consiste en troupeaux et en produits de la terre qu'ils se procurent par voie d'échange: ils possèdent peu de numéraire; partout sur leur passage ils trouvent le sel, prairies salées, sources, fruits, ou marais; c'est une illusion de croire que tant qu'ils seront nomades, nous puissions les astreindre à se fournir à nos dépôts. Quant au fellah de l'Irak, le paysan qui travaille la terre pour compte d'autrui, celui-là est dénué de toutes ressources. A demi-nu ou vêtu d'un grossier "aba" qui tombe en loques il n'a pour ainsi dire rien qu'il possède en propre, sauf son fusil—le Henry-Martini, dans le Kurdistan. Il sait que, quoiqu'il arrive, son profit personnel sera nul; il subsiste seulement. Pour lui, le temps et les distances ne sont rien. Il ne peut concevoir cette obligation de payer 20 ou 25 paras le kilog., c'est-à-dire, dans le langage du pays, 2 piastres, ou 2½ piastres, une matière qu'il lui est facile de se procurer pour rien en allant la chercher lui-même aux endroits qu'il connaît ou par échange contre du riz et de l'orge, ou enfin, s'il est réduit à verser des espèces, à un prix variant de 3 à 5 paras. Réunis par petites groupes, ayant pour bêtes de somme des ânes qui ne valent pas plus de 20 piastres de Constantinople (80 piastres du pays): les fellahs abandonnent volontiers leur famille, leur hutte en terre ou leur "tchardak" en nattes, leurs occupations rudimentaires, pour entreprendre des voyages de plusieurs jours et revenir chargés de quelques kilog. de sel. S'ils ont la mauvaise fortune de rencontrer des zaptiés ou des coldjis, et si, les apercevant de loin, ils reconnaissent que ceux-ci appartiennent à une tribu ennemie, ils se débarrassent de leur sel, consentent au besoin à livrer leurs ânes et passent leur chemin; parfois ils se défendent les armes à la main. Dans aucun cas la leçon ne leur est profitable.

Dans les régions Kurdes qui forment la plus grande partie du Vilayet de Mossoul, où la sécurité est précaire et où la population est plus farouche que partout ailleurs, la contrebande, faute d'autre moyen d'existence, est devenue un véritable métier pratiqué par des bandes bien armées.

La contrebande sera dans l'Irak un mal inévitable tant que cette contrée restera dans la malheureuse situation où elle se trouve actuellement réduite. Comme partout ailleurs,

les recettes de la Dette Publique y suivent une marche parallèle à celle du pays. Que les tribus nomades, chez lesquelles le pillage est aujourd'hui en honneur, trouvent avantage à devenir sédentaire, que la sécurité soit assurée à tous, que de vastes travaux d'irrigations apportent la fertilité aux immenses territoires qui sont laissés en friche malgré leur fécondité latente, que les marais soient desséchés, que des voies de communication, routes, canaux, chemins de fer, soient percés dans tous les sens, alors, en même temps que le Gouvernement lui-même, notre Administration recueillera sans peine la moisson à laquelle elle a droit.

Le fait si souvent cité par nos agents, de la hausse de nos recettes sous l'administration de son Excellence Omar Pacha à Mossoul, vient confirmer nos appréciations. A cette époque, Décembre 1308 à Mai 1309, la poursuite de la contrebande n'était de notre part ni plus ni moins active qu'elle ne l'avait été auparavant; elle l'était moins qu'elle ne l'a été ensuite. Mais par un ensemble de réformes bien comprises et poursuivies avec esprit de suite, l'abaissement des Cheiks et des Aghas, le désarmement des tribus, la justice dans la perception des impôts, la sécurité avait été rendue à la population et immédiatement le pays avait pris un certain essor; le paysan travaillait sans crainte ses terres, les caravanes circulaient librement, tous ceux qui jusqu'alors s'étaient livrés par nécessité à la contrebande trouvaient des occupations moins aléatoires et plus productives.

Nous devons dire immédiatement que les provinces de l'Irak au lieu de progresser et de s'enrichir, s'appauvrissent visiblement. L'Administration de la Liste Civile en draine chaque année de £T. 150,000 à £T. 180,000 et les budgets des vilayets de Mossoul sont en plein déficit.

Les recettes du Vilayet de Bagdad sont de £ T. 230,000, sur lesquelles le 6e Corps d'Armée prélève £ T. 170,000 par havalés pour son entretien. Le reste alimente au fur et à mesure des rentrées, et en laissant des arriérés variables, les différents services du Chéri, de la Justice, de l'Intérieur, de la Gendarmerie, &c.

En 1310 les recettes prévues du Vilayet de Mossoul ont été de £ T. 174,000 et les dépenses prévues étaient de £ T. 225,900.

Le Vilayet de Bassorah seul offre des excédents avec en moyenne £T. 180,000 de recettes pour £ T. 70,000 de dépenses; ce sont ces excédents qui couvrent les déficits du Vilayet de Mossoul, notamment pour les deux Sandjiaks de Kerkouk et de Suleymanié.

Une diminution générale des recettes est prévue pour l'année 1312.

En somme de ces recettes, il ne reste rien pour le pays lui-même. Les inondations de la fin de 1311 ont détruit le peu de digues et de travaux de canalisation qui existent; les cultures maraîchères et les plantations des dattiers sont sérieusement compromises. Sauf l'établissement d'un barrage à Hindieh sur l'Euphrate et le projet d'un pont sur un canal ancien près de Bagdad avec çà et là quelques travaux d'irrigations sur les terrains de la Liste Civile, nous n'avons à espérer prochainement aucun grand ouvrage d'utilité publique. Le Tigre, qui n'a même pas été rendu navigable jusqu'à Mossoul, continuera à n'être bon qu'à transporter, à la descente, de grossiers radeaux; comme aux temps antiques les Kelekjès sont obligés de remonter à dos de mulet leurs outres jusqu'au point de départ. Le prochain hiver verra, comme d'habitude, les communications coupées, les postes en retard, les fils télégraphiques rompus; le seul pont qui existait sur toute la route de Bagdad à Mossoul, bien qu'il y ait plusieurs rivières sur le trajet, celui d'Altoun Kenpru, belle construction du temps des Khalifs, a été emporté en 1311 parce qu'il n'avait pas été réparé depuis plusieurs années, et il n'est aucunement question de le réédifier. Quant à la sécurité mieux vaut ne pas insister là-dessus; la coutume de "Ghazou" subsiste chez les tribus Arabes, et dans le seul Sandjiak de Suleymanieh, les officiers estiment qu'il y a 50,000 cavaliers armés de Henry-Martini, dont la ville de Suleymanieh est aujourd'hui le centre de fabrication. Muntéfik, Anézé, Chama, El Obéid, Djibou, Abou-Sultan, Talabani, Hamarvand, Bibani, Pitchéri, &c., ont carte blanche dans l'Irak.

La direction civile et militaire de trois vilayets est confiée à des hommes éminents, profondément au courant de la situation, et qui lui porteraient facilement et promptement remède s'il leur était laissé des pouvoirs assez étendus, et des ressources suffisantes.

No. 105.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 65.)
My Lord, *Pera, February 2, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 59 of the 26th January, I have the honour to transmit herewith an extract from the "Levant Herald" of the 1st February, announcing the appointments of additional members to the Council of State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 105.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of February 1, 1897.

THE following have been appointed members of the Administrative Section of the Council of State: Rassim Pasha, ex-Governor-General of the Vilayet of Tripoli of Barbary; Hadji Hassan Pasha, ex-Vali of the Hedjaz; Gavril Pasha Crestovitch, formerly Governor-General of Eastern Roumelia; Photiades Bey, ex-Prince of Samos; Sakiz Ohannes Effendi, Proctor-General of the Board of Audit; Bohor Effendi, Adjoint of the Prefect of the city; and Assim Bey, late Minister in Athens.

No. 106.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 66.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 2, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that it is announced in the Turkish newspapers this morning that with His Majesty's consent a Vizirial letter has been addressed to all the Valis enjoining the strict execution of the first, second, and final paragraphs of Article 21 of the Schedule of Reforms relating to the adjudication of the tithes, and adding that as in the past it is forbidden to seize and sell land, agricultural implements, ploughing cattle, or seed necessary for the sustenance of the debtor, either in respect of debts to the State or to private persons.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 107.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 68.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 3, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 24 of the 22nd January, respecting the arrest of Mr. Macullum by the Turkish authorities at Marash in November last, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a *note verbale* which I have addressed to the Sublime Porte, claiming an indemnity on his behalf as compensation for the treatment to which he was subjected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 107.

Note Verbale.

HER Majesty's Embassy have the honour to bring the following facts the notice of the Sublime Porte:—

On the 11th November last Mr. Macullum, a British missionary, left Marash with the permission of the local authorities for the purpose of distributing relief in the districts of Zeitoun and Enderoun. On the 13th, when at Alabach, he was summoned to Marash by a zaptieh and on arriving was told by the Mutessarif that orders had been received from Constantinople for his immediate expulsion from the country. Two days later he was dispatched with two zaptiehs and reached Aleppo on the 20th November, when he was handed over to the British Consulate and released owing to the representations made by Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

It would appear that Mr. Macullum's arrest was due to the fact that a sum of 100*l.* given by an American lady in London to Mr. Barnham, Her Majesty Consul at Aleppo, for Nazaret Chaouch of Zeitoun, was forwarded to Mr. Macullum through the Acting British Consul at Aleppo for transmission to its destination. When, however, Mr. Macullum heard that the Mushir Edhem Pasha stated that the money was intended for revolutionary purposes he declared he would not send it to Zeitoun himself and referred the matter to the Mushir and the Mutessarif. The money was handed to these two officials who arranged to send it to Ali Pasha, Commandant at Zeitoun.

It appears that the 100*l.* was accompanied by a letter in Armenian, also sent to Mr. Macullum through the British Consulate at Aleppo. It has been stated that the contents of this letter were seditious, but according to the information of Her Majesty's Embassy it was vaguely worded and could not be justly described as revolutionary. At any rate Edhem Pasha and the Mutessarif can hardly have regarded it as suspicious or they would not have forwarded the money.

It appears from the above account that an arbitrary Decree of expulsion was issued against a British subject that he was obliged to quit his occupations, was taken to Aleppo under police escort, and only released owing to diplomatic intervention.

Her Majesty's Embassy have already had occasion to address the Sublime Porte on the somewhat similar cases of Dr. Wenyon and M. Martini. They must point out that the arbitrary arrest and deportation of British subjects is an infringement of Treaty rights and that British subjects can only be forced to quit their residences and proceed to another spot in virtue of a judicial sentence delivered with the concurrence of the British Consular authority. In the present instance no attempt was made to comply with the established procedure, and Her Majesty's Embassy must therefore request the payment of an indemnity of 100*l.* as a moderate compensation for the indignity, expense, and inconvenience occasioned to Mr. Macullum by the irregular action of the Ottoman authorities.

January 26, 1897.

No. 108.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 69.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 3, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana reporting on the unsatisfactory state of affairs existing in the Payas Caza of that vilayet.

My colleagues and myself had already received Petitions from the Armenian clergy in that district, and I inclose herewith copy of a similar document which was addressed to the British Vice-Consul at Alexandretta.

I am informed that the Armenian Patriarch is alarmed at the condition of Payas and has made representations to the Grand Vizier on the subject. In consequence of the difficulty of obtaining reliable information as to the real state of affairs there, I have instructed Major Massy to visit the district and furnish me with a Report.

Meanwhile, I have made representations to the Sublime Porte in the sense desired by Major Massy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

P.S.—I have to-day received a telegram from Major Massy stating that he has started for Payas and expects to return in eight days.

P. C.

Inclosure 1 in No. 108.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Hamidié, Adana Province, January* 15, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the state of Payas, sub-district of Adana Province, continues to be in a state far from satisfactory.

In the Christian villages of Chokmerjumen, Ojakle, and Najarle, above all, oppression and misrule has reached a point sufficient to make the Christians break out in open revolt. A battalion of soldiers, quartered in the villages, lives on the people, pillaging and ill-treating them.

I most earnestly beg your Excellency to have very imperative and immediate orders sent to the Governor-General of Adana to have this lawlessness at once stopped.

I understand that the Kaimakam of Payas pays no heed to his duties, and that the Mutessarif of Djebel-Béréket is equally useless. Both these officials are recently appointed, and should receive a severe caution.

No part of this province is in so unsatisfactory a state of government as the sub-district (caza) to which I allude. The Moslem police officers even are loud in their denouncement of their superiors. Two Armenians have recently been murdered near Ojakle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 108.

Armenian Clergy to Vice-Consul Cutoni.

(Translation from the Turkish.)
Sir, *Tchokmarzemen, January* 9, 1897.

ALLOW us to take a little of your time in exposing before you our interminable griefs:—

1. On the 31st December last, thieves (Turks) broke into the village of Nadjarly and did a lot of mischief to our Christian villagers; the poor sufferers of the theft, on their appealing to the officer in command of the troops stationed there, were ordered by him to retire to their homes; and, more, he showed them a dead cat which happened to be in front of him, and told them: "You shall all be killed like this cat." These soldiers daily feed at the expense of the Christian inhabitants of Nadjarly, and if anything is refused to them they take it by force, and through beating the owner.

2. On the same day (31st December), in the same village, Turks forced open the house of Missoglou Bedros and took away his two horses, with the help of some soldiers.

3. On the same night of the 31st December, in the village of Odjakly, a Turk, called Mollah Oghlou, with some of his companions, entered the house of Zindikianoghlou Ussep, and they shot him dead while being in his bed.

4. On the 3rd January the Commander of the troops, being in the village of Tchokmarzemen, he addressed to some Moslems who surrounded him in the open street in these terms: "Our country is going towards ruin; there is fear that the Europeans will take it from us; be well prepared to defend our soil." These words were repeated to our Christians by a lot of Moslems who heard them pronounced by the Commander himself.

5. The night during which the Commander was at Tchokmarzemen the troops stole three bullocks from three different owners (Armenians): Kioroghlou Bedros, Nadjaroghlou Kivork, and Bastaji Bedros. In the morning, in front of the soldiers' tents, were visible all the bones and entrails of the animals, which had been eaten up. On the day previous fifteen goats were stolen also by soldiers from Sarkis Hassap; their skins were also found in the vicinity of the camp.

6. The day after the Commander left Tchokmarzemen two Armenians, called Zabzaroghlou Boghos and Kodjayan Serkis, were coming to Tchokmarzemen from Alexandretta on their horses. In front of the Government House of Payas, in broad daylight, some armed Turks stopped them and took their horses from them; with the help of a policeman the Armenians succeeded in having their horses returned, but now the policeman

claims from the two owners £T. 4 for having saved their horses, and threatens them of a worse treatment if they do not pay the money.

7. On the 7th January, the day before yesterday, an Armenian muleteer (an old respectable man), on his way from Marash to Alexandretta, was stopped in the village of Erzin by Turks and beaten with stones and sticks nearly to death without any cause whatever.

8. On the 8th January, close to the village of Odjakly, an Armenian, named Guloghlou Artin, was gathering fire-wood along with three women in the daytime; a few Turks approaching them fired on Artin and shot him dead; they fired also at the women without hurting them.

On every one of the above cases complaints were made to the authorities of Payas, which were regularly rejected. The facts which we have related here above are repeated nearly every day. We do not dare go out of our houses for fear of being killed. At nights we dare not keep a light in our homes; Turks break open our houses and carry away our property. In fact we are reduced to the last degree of misery, and our lives are in danger every minute.

In this state we implore your assistance, Sir, and beg of you to help us in quitting this country for the safety of our lives, for we feel certain we shall be killed one after the other in a short time.

(Signatures) ISAAC, *Priest of Tchokmarzemen.*
SIROP, *ditto.*
HORON, *ditto.*
BOGHOS, *Priest of Odjakly.*
CARABET, *Priest of Uzerly.*
KIVORK, *Priest of Nadjarly.*

No. 109.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 70. Secret.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 2, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a draft of the reforms which the Ambassadors propose shortly to submit to their Governments. They are subject to further revision, and will be accompanied by an introductory Report, which has not yet been drawn up; they must not, therefore, be taken as final or complete.

The mode in which the reforms are to be communicated to the Sultan remains to be considered.

Under the influence of the fears aroused by the meetings of the Ambassadors, His Majesty professes his readiness to adopt any suggestions, provided that they are communicated to him in a private and friendly manner and are not imposed upon him by Europe. Experience, however, shows that no reforms will be genuinely executed except under strong and continuous pressure from the Powers. The difficulty of overcoming the Sultan's resistance is great, but the moment is in some respects an exceptionally favourable one for doing so.

The dissatisfaction with his rule, which has for some time pervaded all classes, seems to have reached its climax, and the action of the Powers is awaited with extreme anxiety by Mussulmans as well as Christians.

The object of the Ambassadors has been to take advantage of this feeling, and we have endeavoured to put the reforms into a shape that will recommend them to Turks of all classes.

It is not likely that the pressure of the Powers, however vigorously it may be exerted for the establishment of the reforms, can be permanently kept up at the same strength, and if the result of our efforts is to be lasting, it must be supported by such public opinion as exists in the Ottoman Empire.

The problem with which we have had to deal has been to discover the means of restraining the exercise of the Sultan's arbitrary power, and especially his interference with all branches of the Administration.

We have found it hopeless to attempt to do this directly, but if the measures we recommend are enforced, and if the Turks are encouraged by them to make efforts on their own behalf, we trust that the means of offering some resistance to the abuses of the Sultan's power may be placed in the hands of his own subjects.

The reforms are divided under seven heads—
1. The institution of a Supreme Council.
2. The control of the finances.
3. Commissions to supervise the execution of the reforms in the provinces.
4. Justice.
5. Police.
6. The creation of Municipalities.
7. The Press Law.

1. We propose that the Supreme Council, which is to exercise supervision over the various branches of the Administration and over the choice of the provincial Governors, should be composed *ex officio* of certain retired functionaries, civil, military, and religious, of the highest class, combined with the Heads of the Christian communities. Under this arrangement they will not be dependent upon the Sultan for their appointments, and being in the enjoyment of pensions, and, having most of them completed their terms of service, we consider that they are likely to show more independence than men who are still expecting promotion.

Many of these veterans are no doubt bigoted and corrupt; but they have all had experience of the business of the country, and so far as can be judged from their language, some of them are not destitute of patriotic feeling.

2. The Sultan has of his own accord invited foreign assistants to take part in the management of the finances. We recommend that this assistance should be given by Commissioners proposed by the Powers, who will be associated with an equal number of Ottoman Commissioners.

3. We suggest the appointment of European Commissions in the provinces as the only way of bringing into operation the long-promised and long-delayed reforms.

4. In regard to justice we have not ventured to do more than propose a means of reforming the Magistrature.

5. The direct subjection of the Minister of Police to the Palace has been a crying source of evil. We recommend that he should henceforth be under the control of the Porte, and we have endeavoured to introduce some security against arbitrary arrests.

6. The establishment of Municipalities, in which the foreign element will be represented and the resources of which will no longer be diverted to other objects, will, it is hoped, remedy the disgraceful condition of the towns and introduce securities for life and property which are now wanting.

7. The Press Law of 1865, although somewhat severe, appears not ill-suited to the conditions of this country; but it has been superseded since 1867 by an Order, stated to be provisional in character, which placed the press under the absolute control of the Administration. We propose to revise the Law of 1865.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Draft of Reforms to be submitted to the Governments of the Six Great Powers.

Conseil Suprême.

1. Il est institué un Conseil Suprême de Discipline et de Contrôle.
2. Le Conseil est composé de—
(1.) Les anciens Grands Vizirs ou Premiers Ministres.
(2.) Les anciens Sheikh-ul-Islam.
(3.) Les Mushirs militaires ayant exercé un commandement supérieur.

(4.) Les Chefs de communautés religieuses non-Musulmanes, ou leurs remplaçants.
(5.) Les fonctionnaires civils du rang de Muchir et Vizir, appartenant aux catégories suivantes :—
(*a.*) Anciens Ministres à Portefeuille.
(*b.*) Anciens Ambassadeurs.
(*c.*) Anciens Gouverneurs des provinces privilégiées.

3. Les membres du Conseil Suprême sont inamovibles. Ils ne peuvent être appelés à des fonctions actives que de leur consentement. Pendant la durée de ces fonctions, ils cesseront de prendre part aux délibérations du Conseil. Ils ne pourront être destitués qu'en vertu d'une sentence motivée du Conseil. Ils ne toucheront de traitement spécial en raison de leurs fonctions que dans le cas d'insuffisance des pensions et émoluments qu'ils recevraient à d'autres titres.

4. Le Conseil Suprême exercera un contrôle sur les services financiers, administratifs, et judiciaires, soit directement en demandant des éclaircissements au Département compétent, et en s'adjoignant, s'il y a lieu, des agents techniques, soit indirectement par l'organe de Commissions Spéciales.

5. Il prendra connaissance du projet de Budget, et fera ses observations s'il y a lieu. Le réglement des comptes des exercices clos lui sera régulièrement présenté. Tous les projets ou mesures entraînant une dépense extraordinaire devront lui être soumis.

6. Les Valis devront être choisis sur une liste dressée par le Conseil.

7. Il appartiendra au Conseil Suprême d'exercer une surveillance spéciale sur la stricte application des Règlements relatifs au choix et à l'avancement des fonctionnaires de l'ordre judiciaire.

8. Le Conseil connaîtra des plaintes et réclamations contre les abus des fonctionnaires et employés. Il statuera sur les recours des fonctionnaires et employés de tout ordre.

9. Pour l'exécution de celle de ses décisions qui nécessiteraient une intervention administrative, le Conseil s'adressera au Grand Vizir, qui devra procéder dans un délai maximum de huit jours.

10. Un compte rendu sommaire des délibérations du Conseil sera publié officiellement.

Finances.

Un Conseil Permanent composé en nombre égal de membres Ottomans et Européens (ces derniers proposés par les Grandes Puissances) sera chargé d'établir la situation budgétaire, de réformer l'Administration Financière, de dresser un Budget régulier et d'en contrôler l'exécution. Le Conseil aura avant tout à établir le montant des arriérés et à proposer les moyens propres à les régler, en liquidant d'abord les appointements des fonctionnaires civils et militaires.

S'il reconnaît la nécessité de procéder à un emprunt, et dans le cas où celui-ci serait conclu avec le concours des Puissances, des Délégués des Ambassades lui seront adjoints pour surveiller l'emploi des fonds à provenir de cet emprunt.

Commissions Provinciales.

Exécution et Surveillance des Réformes.

1. La mise à exécution des réformes décrétées sera confiée à deux Hauts Commissaires Ottomans nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, l'un pour l'Europe, l'autre pour l'Asie, qui seront munis de larges pouvoirs.

Le Commissaire aura le droit de requérir l'assistance des autorités tant civiles que militaires qui seront tenues de lui fournir les moyens de tout ordre dont elles disposent; il pourra suspendre tout fonctionnaire dont l'activité lui sera signalée et aura été reconnue par lui comme nuisible à l'œuvre dont il est chargé.

2. La surveillance de l'application des réformes sera déférée à deux Commissions Internationales de Contrôle, l'une pour les provinces de la Turquie d'Europe, l'autre pour les provinces de la Turquie d'Asie.

Les Commissions seront composées de Délégués des Six Grandes Puissances, qui pourront être accompagnés de Drogmans.

Un Délégué spécial Ottoman, de grade convenable, sera attaché à chacune

des Commissions pour servir d'intermédiaire dans ses relations avec les autorités Ottomanes.

3. Chaque Commission se transportera successivement dans chacun des vilayets. Les Délégués se rendront d'abord au chef-lieu de la province, et visiteront, s'ils le jugent à propos, ensemble ou séparément, les sandjiaks, les cazas, et, au besoin, les nahiés.

4. Les Commissions auront pour mission de surveiller sur les lieux l'application exacte et entière des réformes édictées par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Elles auront à s'enquérir des dispositions prises pour leur exécution, et de la suite pratique qui leur sera donnée, ainsi que du choix des fonctionnaires administratifs et judiciaires, et des pouvoirs qui leur auront été attribués.

5. Si par suite de l'état particulier d'une région quelconque des difficultés locales s'opposaient à la mise à exécution immédiate des réformes, les Commissions devront en rechercher les causes, et aviser aux moyens les plus propres à assurer l'application pratique des mesures arrêtées, en tenant compte des circonstances.

A cet effet, les Délégués tâcheront de s'enquérir de l'état des diverses classes de la population, de leurs rapports réciproques, de leurs relations avec les Agents du Gouvernement; ils prendront auprès des autorités civiles, militaires, et religieuses toutes les informations de nature à les éclairer. Partout où les Délégués se rendront, la population locale tant Musulmane que Chrétienne aura libre accès auprès d'eux pour leur exposer ses griefs et ses vœux, et leur remettre des Pétitions, sans que les autorités puissent y mettre obstacle, ou en faire un motif de poursuites.

Les fonctionnaires Ottomans de tout grade pourront être invités par la Commission à fournir des éclaircissements sans qu'ils puissent être inquiétés de ce chef.

6. Lorsque dans l'exercice de leur mandat les Délégués jugeront nécessaire à la majorité des voix d'adresser aux autorités locales des conseils, des suggestions, des observations, ou des remontrances, ils le feront soit directement, soit par l'intermédiaire du Délégué spécial Ottoman attaché à chacune des Commissions et si une suite n'y est point donnée par l'organe du Haut Commissaire Ottoman.

C'est à ce dernier également qu'ils auront à s'adresser dans des cas extraordinaires, tels que la destitution ou suspension immédiate d'un fonctionnaire ou l'adoption d'une mesure spéciale, qui seraient reconnus nécessaires par l'unanimité des Délégués, &c. Ils auraient à en aviser aussitôt les Ambassades, qui appuieraient leur demande auprès de la Porte si le Commissaire ne jugeait pas possible ou ne se croyait pas en droit d'y procéder de sa propre autorité.

7. Les fonctions des Commissions Internationales seront temporaires et devront cesser en vertu d'un accord des Ambassades dès que les réformes promulguées auront été introduites ou leur exécution assez avancée pour rendre inutile une surveillance spéciale.

Justice.

Un Règlement sera élaboré avec le concours du Conseil de l'ordre des Avocats de Constantinople, pour établir les conditions d'entrée dans la Magistrature et les règles de l'avancement des Magistrats.

Ce Règlement établira également un mode de nomination et de surveillance pour tous les auxiliaires de la justice.

Police.

En vue de garantir la sécurité publique et la liberté individuelle, il est indispensable de réorganiser la police, qui ne devra relever que de la Sublime Porte.

Cette réorganisation aura lieu sous la direction de spécialistes Européens.

Des dispositions spéciales régleront les conditions des arrestations qui ne pourront être opérées qu'en vertu de mandats réguliers, et par des agents officiels légalement autorisés à y procéder.

Municipalités.

Une Municipalité mixte sera rétablie à Péra avec le concours des Représentants étrangers. Des institutions analogues seront progressivement étendues à toutes les parties de la capitale, ainsi qu'aux autres villes de l'Empire, en tenant compte des divers éléments locaux Ottomans ou étrangers.

Les Municipalités auront à leur charge l'organisation et l'entretien d'une police municipale, qui pourra être dirigée par un chef Européen.

Elles établiront leur budget, et en assureront l'exécution.

Leurs délibérations seront publiques.

Presse.

La Loi de la Presse de 1865 sera strictement appliquée. Le régime administratif provisoire établi par le Règlement de 1867 prendra fin.

No. 110.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 74. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Pera, February 3, 1897.*

I AM informed that the Armenians of Constantinople are doing their best to prevent the various revolutionary Societies established abroad from making any movement before they know the result of the attempt now being made by the Powers to reform Turkey. A person who was employed on a similar mission at the end of last year has been sent by the Patriarch to visit Paris, London, and Geneva with this object, and has so far met with success. It is said that the Troshag is the only Society in favour of action, the others being ready to wait, and it is hoped that the members of this organization also may be induced to follow the same policy.

It is also stated that the Sultan has sent three Delegates to Europe to interview the members of the Young Turkey party, and promise them that if they keep quiet he will introduce reforms, and perhaps re-enact the Constitution. This action, if true, is no doubt due to His Majesty's fears that disturbances may take place during the month of Ramazan, which has just commenced. It has always been predicted that disturbances would occur during this period, as the custom of paying visits during the night gives opportunities for arranging conspiracies which do not occur at other times.

I may mention that the Dervishes, who are always regarded as a dangerous element, have been ordered to close their "tekkes," or religious establishments, at sunset during Ramazan, although their usual practice is to spend the whole night in religious exercises during the same season.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 111.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 76.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, respecting the alleged appropriation by the Governor-General of that vilayet of certain sums out of the revenues ceded to the Public Debt.

Sir V. Caillard, whom I consulted as to the truth of Mr. Longworth's remarks, has given me the inclosed statement of the exact sums improperly encashed, but he informs me that the loss has since been made good to the Public Debt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 111.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Trebizond, January* 19, 1897.

THE "Standard" of the 6th instant contains a statement made by its Vienna correspondent, which is not altogether devoid of truth.

Referring to M. de Nélidow's *note verbale* respecting the Public Debt, and observing that nothing is known of any attempt to infringe the rights of the bondholders by alienating their sources of income, the following remark is added :—

"The only case in point—that in which the Governor-General of Trebizond had to refund certain sums illegally cashed by him—had reference solely to the sources of revenue assigned as a guarantee for the Anatolian railways, and provisionally administered by the Dette Publique, and not in any way to the various items of revenue pledged to the Committee of Bondholders as such."

The sums alluded to above reached the figure of £ T. 18,000, which, with about £ T. 18,000 from the Ottoman Bank and £ T. 11,000 from the Tithe Department, &c., the Vali, Cadri Bey, found himself under the necessity of borrowing in order to meet the extraordinary expenditure entailed by the enrolment of the reserves, consisting of eight battalions, called out in the latter part of the year 1895.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 111.

STATEMENT as to Sums improperly appropriated by the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Trebizond.

	Piastres.
Dimes affectées à la Banque Impériale Ottomane. Les sommes indûment perçues par le Vilayet de Trébizonde s'élèvent à	2,799,806
Dimes affectées au Chemin de fer Eski-Chehr–Konieh. Les sommes indûment perçues par le vilayet s'élèvent à	2,452,043
Total	5,251,849

In round figures, £ T. 51,000.

No. 112.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 33. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, February* 5, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 27 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to report that Baron von Marschall told me this afternoon that he had been completely satisfied with a conversation he had had with Count Muravieff during his short stay at Berlin.

Count Muravieff had expressed the most pacific intentions. He had alluded to his recent visit to Paris, where he had found equally pacific sentiments, and he observed that the Franco-Russian *entente* was based upon the idea of the maintenance of peace, and that he had given it clearly to be understood that French Chauvinism would find no support in Russia. He had also been impressed by the ability of M. Meline, M. Hanotaux, and of President Faure, and had come to the conclusion that the present French Government, which might be considered as a Conservative Government, had good prospects of being able to maintain itself in power.

With regard to the Eastern question, Count Muravieff had stated that the policy of the Emperor of Russia was to maintain the authority of the Sultan and to preserve the integrity of the Turkish Empire. He thought, therefore, that although it would be necessary to insist upon the Sultan carrying out the reforms which might be considered necessary, it would be impolitic to press upon His Majesty demands to which he could not agree. A further danger might then arise, which would threaten to destroy rather than to maintain the Turkish Empire. In any case, Russia desired to continue to act in perfect harmony with all the other Powers, and had no intention of separating from them or taking any isolated action of her own.

I thanked Baron von Marschall for the information he had given me, and told him that in the short conversation I had had with Count Muravieff he had expressed the hope of being able to cultivate friendly relations with Her Majesty's Government, and that, as far as he could see, the only question on which there was likely to be a divergence of opinion between the two Governments was the preventive measures to be adopted to prevent the introduction of the plague into Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 113.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 41.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February* 8, 1897; *noon.*

RUMOURS have been spread that a Turkish demonstration was about to take place, and a manifesto in this sense, purporting to come from the Young Turkey Revolutionary party, has been addressed to the Ambassadors.

Russian Ambassador has heard that in the event of any demonstration being attempted, the Turkish troops have been ordered to act with the utmost severity, and to strike terror by killing indiscriminately, so that movement may be crushed before Sultan's annual visit to Stamboul, which takes place on the 17th instant.

Yesterday M. Nélidow read me a note which he had addressed to Tewfik Pasha, in which he referred to the language used by Count Mouravieff to Munir Bey, the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, and warned the Porte of the consequences which would ensue if, in the event of further disturbances taking place in Constantinople, the police or troops were not kept in hand, and if innocent persons suffered violence.

These consequences, the note said, might even involve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

No. 114.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 43.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 8, 1897.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabriz,* in which he forwards a copy of a letter from the Rev. F. F. Irving, of the English Mission at Urmi, respecting the persecution of Nestorians on Turkish territory by Sheikh Saddik and his relatives.

I have to call your Excellency's attention to the position of the Matran of Nochea, who is at present a refugee at Kochanes, and to request that you will take such steps as you properly can for his protection, and for enabling him to cross into Persian territory.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 115.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 81.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana respecting the deplorable state of the administration and finances of the vilayet, and reporting a mutiny on the part of 500 soldiers at Mersina, who had not received any pay for months.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* No. 70.

Inclosure in No. 115.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)

Sir, *Hamidié, Adana Province, January* 16, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency the following remarks on the deplorable state of the administration and finances of this province.

Your Excellency will recall my appeal, by telegram last May, to enforce the payment of the troops in this province. In consequence of your Excellency's action a small payment was made, and a serious outbreak was averted. But the wretched soldiery remain in much the same state, unpaid, unclad, unequipped. Recently a body of some 500 men besieged the houses of their officers in Mersina, threatening to burn them to the ground.

The company quartered at Osmanié has not been paid for twelve months, having only received 1 mejidieh (3*s.* 6*d.*) at the last Baïram festival.

The mounted police of my escort, during my present journey, appealed to me to use my endeavours to have them paid, saying that they had received nothing for seven months.

As a consequence, these people plunder to live, the soldiery live on the villagers round their quarters, the police commit every sort of lawless act. Thus, when sent to capture a murderer or a thief, a bribe of a few shillings insures his not being found.

The Government officials of every grade are daily becoming more corrupt, and justice is a thing unknown.

The Moslem population is crying out against this state of things, and makes no secret of its discontent. The people ask me what will become of them, how all is to end. They are in a state of almost complete destitution, and complain bitterly of the heavy and ever-increasing taxation.

The tax to be levied to cover the recent extraordinary expenses of the Government, and which, nominally, is to amount to a few piastres a-head, but in many cases reaches several pounds, would appear to be "the last straw," and the groans of the poverty-stricken people are loud against a Government whose misrule has caused all their troubles.

This Government endeavours still to lay the blame on the Christians and on the events of fifteen months ago, but few believe this, and rightly think that a proper Government could have quelled a rising, caused by misrule, in as many days as it has now taken months, and with one-hundredth part of the expense.

In short, everything is going from bad to worse, commerce is at a standstill, the population is poverty-stricken and discontented, and one can only ask how long it will be possible to keep together such a crumbling misgoverned country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 116.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 15.)

(No. 82.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting a demonstration on the part of the Armenians against the newly-selected Catholicos of Sis, and recommending to the notice of Her Majesty's Embassy the cases of certain Armenian prisoners at Hadjin and Adana. I have telegraphed to Major Massy for the names of the prisoners, and shall make representations on their behalf to the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 116.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)

Sir, *Adana, January* 19, 1897.

IN my despatch No. 68 of the 10th December, 1896, I informed your Excellency of the nomination of Ohanes Kazanjian as Catholicos of Sis, in opposition to the votes of the Bishops and to the wishes of the Armenian community.

This man being present at church at Adana on Sunday, the 10th instant, a very animated demonstration against him ensued. He was accompanied by Nicolios Episcopos, of Fournuz, a notoriously bad man. The police and soldiery having restored order, some twenty Armenians were imprisoned on no explicit charge.

This is but a repetition of the old story. Government misgoverns, oppresses, and bullies, then imprisons so as to levy money to liberate. It is ceaseless in this province, and I do not think that five truly honest, upright officials could be found amongst the Government.

In Hadjin and Sis some fifteen Christians lie in gaol with the worst Moslem criminals on a charge of murder, of which they are most probably innocent. Now, at Adana, in consequence of the base action of the Government in forcing its people to accept its tool as Catholicos, and even to sign pretended statements of satisfaction at his nomination, some twenty more innocent men lie incarcerated until their friends pay large sums to every grade of Turkish official in order to obtain their liberation.

All classes are crying out against this Government, asking the use of its pretended amnesties. Already two Armenians, liberated under the amnesty, have been cast back into prison on the pretext that they are to be sent to their native towns. As a matter of fact, both these men's villages have been burnt to the ground during the late massacres through the inaction—or action—of this same Government.

The Bishop of Fournuz, Nicolios, accompanied by a priest of equally bad repute, has been sent to Constantinople by the Governor-General of Adana, I presume, to give a version of the case favourable to his friend, the selected Catholicos.

The person the Armenians appear to wish for as Catholicos is Krikoris Aladjian, now in Constantinople.

I cannot find expressions strong enough to place before your Excellency the state of base corruption of the Government of this province in every class. From this corruption, which is daily increasing, and being practised in a shamelessly open manner, it would appear as though the impression prevailed everywhere that the end is nigh, and that time is short for piling away the ill-gotten gains of office.

I respectfully recommend to your Excellency the cases of the prisoners at Hadjin and at Adana, above mentioned, as ones where the immediate release of the innocent might be demanded and enforced with good effect. Your Excellency may rely on the accuracy of the details I always give in my despatches, no matter how contradicted from Government sources. I place nothing on paper without careful corroboration.

As the Hadjin prisoners have now been confined some three months, there has been ample time for the sifting of evidence and the liberation of those who must necessarily be innocent amongst them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 117.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 15.)

(No. 83.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, forwarding a despatch from the British Consular Agent at Mosul on general matters connected with that vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 117.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)
Bagdad, January 13, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour, very respectfully, to forward herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a news-letter, No. 55, dated the 30th December, 1896, from our British Consular Agent at Mosul, which may, perhaps, prove interesting.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 117.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(Translation.)
(No. 55.)
Mosul, December 30, 1896.

Sir,

WITH reference to my letter No. 48, dated the 17th November, 1896, I have the honour to inform you that Abdullah Pasha, the late Kaimakam of Arbil, and Abdullah Beg, the late Kaimakam of Rawanduz, who were sent out on the part of this vilayet for quieting the Pushdar tribes, after their revolt against the Government, have succeeded in setting right their affairs and persuading them to offer submission to Government, and that the above-named Deputies have submitted a strong report to the vilayet, enumerating the whole of the considerable losses which his Excellency Abdullah Pasha, the late Vali, has caused them by dispatching troops against them who attacked, plundered, and burned a number of their villages.

Last week an order was received from the Sublime Porte enjoining an increase in the tax upon sheep and upon tithes in this vilayet, to commence from the 1st March next, so the tax of 3 G. S. piastres upon each sheep will be 3½ per cent., and the tithe, which was 11½ per cent., will be 12 per cent., and the fee for "tezkert-i-nafoos" (registration certificate) G. S. piastres 2 instead of 1.

The Sublime Porte has, with its independent authority, issued orders that the amount of contribution collected from the Moslem inhabitants of the vilayet for "insha'at askarieh" (military undertakings) should make up £T. 40,000, one-half to be collected from the district of Mosul and the other half from those of Kerkook and Suleimanieh. The Mahommedans of the vilayet feel it very heavy upon them to bear this contribution, and, according to what I hear, they intend to submit a "Muzbatta" to Government and beg for a reduction. The Heads of the Christian communities here, deeming it expedient to make the members of their communities to join in the contribution by payment of a portion of the said contribution, applied to the Acting Vali for permission without consulting their people. The Acting Vali thereupon represented the matter to Constantinople, and an answer was received ordering acceptance, and expressing the Imperial satisfaction for the offer. But neither the Chaldean Patriarch nor the Jacobite Syrian Bishop have been able to collect any sum, for their people do not wish to join in the contribution. Only the Syrian Catholic Patriarch has been able to collect about 50 liras from his community, and is endeavouring to make it 100 liras, even if it be from his own purse.

The road from Salahiyeh to Mosul is reported to be unsafe in these days, owing to the movements of certain tribes, especially the Hamawand, which is committing highway robberies and plundering caravans, so much so, that a few days ago a caravan of camels coming from Bagdad was attacked by a party of the latter tribe and plundered of a number of loads of goods belonging to merchants, who, on receiving notice, complained to Government, but no steps have as yet been taken for the recovery of the property, or any possible means adopted for search and apprehension of the robbers and for the safety of the roads.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 118.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 84.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas respecting the progress made with the execution of the reforms in the Vilayet of Sivas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 118.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 39.)
Sir, *Sivas, January* 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that, except in two cases, the elections of Mudirs for the nahiés of Sivas are completed. The Vali telegraphed for permission to appoint them, but has so far received no answer. Numerous applications for appointment as secretary to the Mudirs have been received by the Government, and as soon as the necessary permission is received, the appointment of the Mudirs and secretaries and nahié police will be completed.

Two hundred and twenty-six Christians have been enrolled in the gendarmerie. The full proportion is 252, and will shortly be complete.

The Tahsildars have been appointed: 26 are Christians. This is the proportion required.

Seventy-three Christians are employed in the various Departments. This is an increase of about 30. The full proportion is over 100. The Vali informs me he will fill vacancies as they occur, by the appointment of Christians.

The Muavin of the Vali is appointed to Rhodes, and has left. His successor has not arrived. Some months ago a Muavin was appointed to the Mutessarif of Tokat, but has not yet arrived. No Muavin has been appointed to Amassia, nor to the Cazas of Divigh or Sou-cheri (Enderes), at which places they are required, but Muavins are present at their post at Kara-Hissar, at Gurun, and at Merrifoun; and an Armenian Kaimakam at Kotch-Hissar. The Vali informs me that he has no authority to appoint Muavins, and that it rests with the Porte. It is to be desired that these appointments be made without further delay, as their effect is good.

The other reforms are complete, but I have been obliged to draw the attention of the Vali to the rule forbidding the forced sale of cattle used for agricultural purposes, or of flour or other necessities for the payment of taxes, as several cases are reported to have occurred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 119.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 86.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 9, 1897.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 27 of the 23rd January, respecting the tortures inflicted on Mr. Senger's employés in prison, I have the honour to submit that it might entail some risk upon the men if mention were made of their names in any representations to the Sublime Porte. I propose, however, to confine myself to a general remonstrance against the use of torture by the Turkish prison officials. Mr. Senger whom I consulted on the subject, shares my opinion as to the danger of making any representations on behalf of his men personally, but suggests that he might be allowed to increase his claim against the Turkish Government for losses during the disturbances in Constantinople by a sum to be paid to his men as compensation for their sufferings. I have the honour to inclose a copy of a letter received from Mr. Senger on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 119.

Mr. Seager to Sir P. Currie.

Constantinople, February 2, 1897.

Dear Sir,

IN reply to your letter received yesterday, I have to say that I entirely agree with the suggestion of your Excellency that it would do more harm than good to the tortured men if they were to adopt the course recommended by the Foreign Office of addressing a protest to the Turkish Government. In fact, I fear that they would be again arrested and possibly killed.

The only practical course which I can suggest is that the Embassy should allow me to increase my claim against the Government by a sum which Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy itself might retain to pay over to the men, or which I would bind myself to pay over to them.

I may add that I am daily experiencing loss and inconvenience from the attack made upon my warehouse. Three men, as you will remember, were murdered; three imprisoned, of whom two were tortured, and my Headman was forced to flee the country. The consequence is that my business arrangements are completely out of gear, and were I to receive the full amount claimed by me, it would not compensate me for the loss my business has sustained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. SEAGER.

No. 120.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 15.)

(No. 88. Secret.)

Constantinople, February 10, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of the proposals signed by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople on the 8th instant, respecting the introduction of reforms into Turkey, and also a copy of the Collective Report, in which we record our views as to the present condition of the Ottoman Empire, and the reasons which guided us in framing the recommendations which we now submit to the consideration of our respective Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 120.

Propositions signed by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers at Constantinople, January 27 (*February* 8), 1897.

1. UN Conseil Suprême de contrôle et de discipline composé de membres de droit inamovibles exercera sa haute surveillance sur tous les services Financiers, Administratifs, et Judiciaires. (Annexe No. 1.)

2. Un Conseil Financier composé en nombre égal de membres Ottomans et Européens, ces derniers proposés par les Grandes Puissances, sera chargé d'établir la situation budgétaire, de réformer la situation financière, de dresser un Budget régulier et d'en contrôler l'exécution.

Il établira le montant des arriérés et proposera les moyens propres à les régler en liquidant d'abord les appointements des fonctionnaires civils et militaires.

Si le Conseil Financier reconnait la nécessité de procéder à un emprunt et dans le cas où le concours des Grandes Puissances serait nécessaire à sa conclusion, des Délégués des Ambassades seront adjoints au Conseil pour surveiller l'emploi des fonds à provenir de cet emprunt.

3. La surveillance de l'application des lois et de l'exécution des réformes

édictées par le Sultan en 1895 pour les six vilayets Orientaux d'Asie-Mineure, et dans ces deux dernières années pour les autres provinces de l'Empire Ottoman conformément au résumé dressé par les Ambassadeurs, sera confiée à deux Hauts Commissaires Impériaux assistés de deux Commissions composées de Délégués étrangers, l'une pour les provinces d'Anatolie et l'autre pour les provinces de Roumélie. (Annexe No. 2.)

4. Un Règlement sera élaboré avec le concours de membres du barreau de Constantinople pour établir les conditions d'entrée dans la magistrature et les règles de l'avancement des Magistrats.

Ce Règlement instituera un mode de nomination et de surveillance pour tous les auxiliaires de la justice.

5. En vue de garantir la sécurité publique et la liberté individuelle il est indispensable de réorganiser la police, qui ne devra relever que de la Sublime Porte.

Cette réorganisation aura lieu sous la direction de spécialistes Européens.

Des dispositions précises régleront les conditions des arrestations, qui ne pourront être opérées qu'en vertu de mandats réguliers et par des agents légalement autorisés à y procéder.

6. Une Municipalité mixte sera rétablie à Péra avec le concours des Représentants étrangers. Des institutions analogues seront progressivement étendues à toutes les parties de la capitale ainsi qu'aux autres villes de l'Empire, en tenant compte des divers éléments locaux Ottomans ou étrangers.

Les Municipalités auront à leur charge l'organisation et l'entretien d'une police municipale, qui pourra être dirigée par un chef Européen.

Elles établiront leurs budgets et en assureront l'exécution.

Leurs délibérations seront publiées officiellement.

7. La Loi sur la Presse de 1865 sera strictement appliquée.

Le régime administratif provisoire établi par le Règlement de 1867 prendra fin.

(Signé) CALICE.
NÉLIDOW.
P. CAMBON.
P. CURRIE.
SAURMA.
PANSA.

Annexe 1.

Conseil Suprême.

1. Il est institué un Conseil Suprême de discipline et de contrôle.

2. Ce Conseil est composé—

(1.) Des anciens Grands Vizirs ou Premiers Ministres.

(2.) Des anciens Cheikh-ul-Islam.

(3.) Des Muchirs militaires ayant exercé un commandement supérieur.

(4.) Des chefs de communautés religieuses non-Musulmanes ou leurs représentants;

(5.) Des fonctionnaires civils du rang de Muchir et Vizir appartenant aux catégories suivantes:

(*a.*) Anciens Ministres à portefeuille.

(*b.*) Anciens Ambassadeurs.

(*c.*) Anciens Gouverneurs des provinces privilégiées.

3. Les membres du Conseil Suprême sont inamovibles. Ils ne peuvent être appelés à des fonctions actives que de leur consentement. Pendant la durée de ces fonctions ils cessent de prendre part aux délibérations du Conseil. Ils ne pourront être destitués qu'en vertu d'une sentence motivée du Conseil même. Ils ne toucheront de traitement spécial à raison de leurs fonctions que dans le cas d'insuffisance des pensions et émoluments qu'ils recevraient à d'autres titres.

4. Le Conseil Suprême exercera un contrôle sur les services Financiers, Administratifs, et Judiciaires, soit directement, en demandant des éclaircissements au Département compétent et en s'adjoignant, s'il y a lieu, des agents techniques, soit indirectement, par l'organe de Commissions Spéciales.

5. Il prendra connaissance du projet de Budget, et fera ses observations s'il y a lieu. Le règlement des comptes des Exercices clos lui sera régulièrement présenté. Tous les projets ou mesures entraînant une dépense extraordinaire devront lui être soumis.

6. Les Valis devront être choisis sur une liste dressée par le Conseil.

7. Il appartiendra au Conseil Suprême d'exercer une surveillance spéciale sur la stricte

application des Règlements relatifs au choix et à l'avancement des fonctionnaires de l'ordre judiciaire.

8. Le Conseil connaîtra des plaintes et réclamations contre les abus des fonctionnaires et employés. Il statuera sur les recours des fonctionnaires et employés de tout ordre.

9. Pour l'exécution de celles de ses décisions qui nécessiteraient une intervention administrative, le Conseil adressera au Grand Vizir, qui devra procéder dans un délai de huit jours.

10. Un compte-rendu sommaire des délibérations du Conseil sera publié officiellement.

Annexe 2.

Exécution et Surveillance des Réformes.

1. La mise à exécution des réformes décrétées sera confiée à deux Hauts Commissaires Ottomans nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan—l'un pour l'Europe, l'autre pour l'Asie—qui seront munis de larges pouvoirs.

Le Commissaire aura le droit de requérir l'assistance des autorités tant civiles que militaires qui seront tenues de lui fournir les moyens de tout ordre dont elles disposent; il pourra suspendre tout fonctionnaire dont l'attitude lui sera signalée et aura été reconnue par lui comme nuisible à l'œuvre dont il est chargé.

2. La surveillance de l'application des réformes sera déférée à deux Commissions Internationales de Contrôle, l'une pour les provinces de la Turquie d'Europe, l'autre pour les provinces de la Turquie d'Asie.

Les Commissions seront composées de Délégués des Six Grandes Puissances, qui pourront être accompagnés de Drogmans.

Un Délégué spécial Ottoman de grade convenable sera attaché à chacune des Commissions pour servir d'intermédiaire dans ses relations avec les autorités Ottomanes.

3. Chaque Commission se transportera dans les vilayets où les réformes devront être appliquées. Les Délégués se rendront d'abord au chef-lieu de la province et visiteront, s'ils le jugent à propos, ensemble ou séparément, les sandjaks, les cazas, et au besoin les nahies.

4. Les Commissions auront pour mission de surveiller sur les lieux l'application exacte et entière des réformes édictées par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Elles auront à s'enquérir des dispositions prises pour leur exécution et de la suite pratique qui leur sera donnée, ainsi que du choix des fonctionnaires administratifs et judiciaires et des pouvoirs qui leur auront été attribués.

5. Si par suite de l'état particulier d'une région quelconque des difficultés locales s'opposaient à la mise à exécution des réformes, les Commissions devront en rechercher les causes et aviser aux moyens les plus propres à assurer l'application pratique des mesures arrêtées, en tenant compte des circonstances.

A cet effet les Délégués tâcheront de s'enquérir de l'état des diverses classes de la population, de leurs rapports réciproques, de leurs relations avec les Agents du Gouvernement; ils prendront auprès des autorités civiles, militaires, et religieuses toutes les informations de nature à les éclairer. Partout où les Délégués se rendront, la population locale, tant Musulmane que Chrétienne, aura libre accès auprès d'eux pour leur exposer ses griefs et ses vœux et leur remettre des Pétitions, sans que les autorités puissent y mettre obstacle ou en faire un motif de poursuites.

Les Fonctionnaires Ottomans de tout grade pourront être invités par la Commission à fournir des éclaircissements sans qu'ils puissent être inquiétés de ce chef.

6. Lorsque dans l'exercice de leur mandat les Délégués jugeront nécessaire à la majorité des voix d'adresser aux autorités locales des conseils, des suggestions, des observations, ou des recommandations, ils le feront, soit directement, soit par l'intermédiaire du Délégué spécial Ottoman, attaché à chacune des Commissions, et si une suite n'y est point donnée, par l'organe du Haut Commissaire Ottoman. C'est à ce dernier également qu'ils auront à s'adresser dans des cas extraordinaires, tels que la destitution ou suspension immédiate d'un fonctionnaire ou autres mesures spéciales reconnues nécessaires par l'unanimité des Délégués, &c. Ils auraient à en aviser aussitôt les Ambassades qui apprécieraient leur demande auprès de la Porte, si le Commissaire ne jugeait pas possible ou ne se croyait pas en droit d'y procéder de sa propre autorité.

7. Les fonctions des Commissions Internationales seront temporaires et devront cesser en vertu d'un accord des Ambassades dès que les réformes promulguées auront été introduites ou leur exécution assez avancée pour rendre inutile une surveillance spéciale.

Inclosure 2 in No. 120.

Collective Report by the Ambassadors of the Six Great Powers.

CHARGÉS par leurs Gouvernements d'examiner la situation de la Turquie et d'y chercher un remède, les Représentants des Grandes Puissances à Constantinople se sont réunis pour se livrer à cette étude.

Leurs instructions conçues dans le même esprit leur prescrivaient d'une façon générale de proposer les réformes nécessaires à l'amélioration du Gouvernement Ottoman, de suggérer les mesures propres à prévenir le retour des lamentables événements de ces deux dernières années, à assurer le maintien de l'ordre, à garantir la sécurité de la population Chrétienne et à faire jouir tous les sujets Ottomans, Musulmans ou Chrétiens, sans distinction de race ou de religion, des bienfaits d'une administration régulière.

Dans la pensée des Cabinets Européens ces mesures doivent être la meilleure sauvegarde de l'intégrité et l'indépendance de l'Empire Ottoman.

En exécution de ces instructions les Ambassadeurs ont successivement porté leur attention sur les vices de l'Administration Ottomane, sur les dangers qui peuvent en résulter, et sur les mesures propres à remédier aux uns et à écarter les autres.

Les vices du Gouvernement Ottoman sont nombreux et invétérés.

L'absorption des pouvoirs publics par le Palais, l'ingérence dans toutes les affaires de personnes étrangères à l'administration et irresponsables, ont insensiblement annihilé la Sublime Porte et jeté le désordre aussi bien dans les services des Ministères que dans toutes les branches de l'Administration provinciale.

Privée de l'appui qu'elle trouvait jadis auprès du Souverain, spectatrice impuissante des influences du dehors qui se sont introduites dans les affaires les plus minimes, la Sublime Porte a vu peu à peu s'effondrer la légitime autorité, grâce à laquelle elle pouvait maintenir la discipline parmi les fonctionnaires.

La ruine de toute hiérarchie, l'absence de toute garantie dans la fixation et le paiement des appointements et de toute règle pour l'avancement, la recherche générale de la faveur ont achevé de détruire les derniers vestiges de l'Administration.

La Magistrature n'a pas échappé à ces fâcheux événements; son recrutement a été soumis aux fluctuations des influences les plus contraires à la marche d'une bonne justice. Les retards dans le paiement de leurs traitements exposent les Magistrats à oublier les devoirs d'indépendance qui leur incombent. Les ordres directs qu'ils reçoivent d'une autorité qui n'est point celle de leurs chefs hiérarchiques ont jeté une confusion inexprimable dans le règlement des affaires judiciaires tant civiles que criminelles et ont fait parfois de la justice dans l'Empire Ottoman un instrument d'iniquité.

La police échappe à tout contrôle; ses agents par leurs procédés arbitraires sont devenus dans bien des cas un sujet de terreur pour la population. Aucune règle ne préside aux arrestations et les récents événements ont jeté un jour sinistre sur le régime des prisons, les souffrances et les tortures endurées par les prisonniers.

La police secrète constituée hors de toute autorité régulière forme aujourd'hui un vaste réseau d'espionage. Les agents recrutés dans toutes les classes sociales épient et dénoncent les moindres démarches les propos les plus insignifiants. La liberté individuelle n'existe plus. Aussi, la sécurité est-elle des plus précaires dans la capitale et les autres villes de l'Empire, où les Municipalités ne semblent avoir d'autre mission que de légitimer le désordre et le gaspillage.

Les finances se trouvent dans le plus complet désarroi.

Depuis de longues années aucun Budget régulier n'a été établi, et c'est par des emprunts onéreux qu'on essaie de faire face à des déficits croissants d'année en année.

Aucune spécialisation n'est établie dans les recettes et les dépenses. Des ressources dont l'emploi semble prévu sont affectées sous des ordres que personne ne peut discuter ni contrôler à des besoins complètement étrangers à leur destination première, parfois même à des objets qui n'ont aucun rapport avec les services de l'État. Les crédits que l'on prétend réserver au paiement des appointements des fonctionnaires ne sont nullement respectés, et la moyenne des arriérés dans les traitements des employés aussi bien que dans la solde de l'armée a pris des proportions qui n'avaient jamais été atteintes jusqu'ici.

En dépit des bons éléments qui la composent l'armée elle-même n'a pas résisté aux atteintes de la démoralisation générale. Il est inutile d'insister sur son rôle dans les récents événements d'Asie-Mineure et de Constantinople. D'autre part, tandis que des arriérés considérables sont dus aux officiers de tout grade, les soldats dans les provinces sont laissés dans un dénûment qui ne fait qu'encourager chez eux l'indiscipline et les excès de tout genre. Le nombre des mécontents s'accroît, et la solidité du plus sérieux appui de l'État se trouve compromise au détriment de la sécurité générale du pays et de celle des étrangers qui y résident.

Des pratiques administratives aussi déplorables suffiraient à expliquer la triste condition de l'Empire Ottoman. D'autres dangers intérieurs le menacent et en menèrent plus graves peut-être, parce qu'ils émanent de l'idée même qui préside au Gouvernement dans l'esprit du Souverain.

Accablé dès le début de son règne par des revers inouïs le Sultan a cherché, dans le développement d'une certaine politique Musulmane, le rachat de ses défaites.

Souverain diminué et résolu à se grandir comme Caliphe Abdul Hamid crut trouver dans la recherche de la suprématie religieuse chez tous les peuples Musulmans la compensation des échecs qu'il venait de subir en Europe et en Asie.

S'appuyant de préférence sur la population Musulmane il sembla vouloir tenir à l'écart ses sujets Chrétiens perdant ainsi le bénéfice du concours d'une des classes les plus éclairées encourageant inconsciemment les tendences séparatistes des diverses nationalités Chrétiennes de l'Empire.

La politique Impériale creusa ainsi plus profondément le fossé qui séparait déjà la population Chrétienne de la population Musulmane.

Le Sultan avait réveillé les passions des classes inférieures. Elles se crurent si bien encouragées d'en haut que le désir de répondre aux vues supposées du Chef des Croyants a suffi pour armer soudainement à Constantinople et sur presque tous les points de l'Empire les Musulmans contre les Chrétiens. L'impunité dont les assassins ont joui jusqu'à ce jour a donné raison à l'instinct populaire. Le goût du massacre, du pillage, et des pires excès s'est répandu dans les basses classes et a réveillé des haines et des convoitises qui entretiennent chez les Chrétiens une perpétuelle anxiété.

Par contre, les intrigues qui se nouent incessamment dans l'entourage du Sultan, les faveurs et les disgrâces soudaines l'espionnage qui n'épargne personne ont suscité de graves mécontentements chez un grand nombre de Musulmans de la classe élevée.

Spectateurs et victimes des maux issus de la politique du Palais ils ne craignent pas de parler tout haut de la nécessité de mettre fin par un changement radical du régime existant à un état de choses dont ils rendent le Souverain responsable en première ligne. Sans constituer, jusqu'ici du moins, un parti susceptible d'exercer une action réelle sur la marche générale des affaires de l'État ils font cependant chaque jour de nouvelles recrues parmi les fonctionnaires civils et les officiers de l'armée. La police spéciale du Palais les poursuit sans relâche et l'on ne compte plus, à l'heure qu'il est, les arrestations arbitraires, les exils et les vexations de toute sorte dont les Musulmans ont été depuis quelque temps les victimes. Chacun se sent menacé et le lendemain est pour tous incertain.

Toutes ces causes d'incertitudes et de trouble affectent gravement les intérêts séculaires, moraux, et matériels des diverses Puissances Européennes en Turquie. Tributaire pour une large part de la civilisation Occidentale, l'Empire Ottoman n'a plus offert depuis quelque temps aux Colonies Européennes et aux affaires qu'elles ont entreprises la sécurité indispensable.

Telles sont indiquées à grands traits les raisons principales des maux dont souffrent les populations Chrétiennes et Musulmanes de l'Empire.

Pour remédier à cette situation les Ambassadeurs n'ont pas cherché des solutions nouvelles. Ils n'ont pas eu la prétention de transformer la Turquie ni de rédiger un programme de plus à ajouter à tous ceux qui sont sortis des Conférences Européennes.

Ils se sont bornés à étudier les moyens d'assurer l'application des lois existantes.

Toutes les matières administratives ont fait l'objet de Règlements tombés peu à peu en désuétude et dont quelques-uns sont excellents. Toutes les mesures les plus propres à garantir la sécurité, la vie, les biens, la liberté des sujets Ottomans ont été édictées par le Sultan mais elles ne sont pas mises en pratique.

Les Ambassadeurs se sont donc appliqués à assurer autant que possible l'exécution de ces mesures à arracher les affaires publiques au bon plaisir de l'entourage irresponsable du Sultan, et à constituer sur toutes les branches des services administratifs une surveillance effective.

C'est l'idée dominante de leurs propositions.

Il fallait d'abord constituer auprès du Sultan un contrôle permanent et indépendant sur les affaires de l'État.

Bien que l'introduction du régime représentatif et la participation directe de la nation au Gouvernement soient réclamées par quelques-uns, il semble que ce système ne réponde encore ni aux besoins du pays, ni à ses conditions ethnographiques, ni à l'évolution naturelle de sa vie politique.

Il a paru que l'institution d'un Conseil Suprême exclusivement composé de membres de droit pris parmi de hauts dignitaires et appelé à contrôler sinon les actes du souverain du moins la marche générale des affaires publiques, satisferait mieux aux

nécessités de la situation. Ce Conseil avec ses attributions essentielles ne serait autre chose que le Medjlis-i-Ali, dont l'institution répond aux traditions les plus antiques et les plus respectables de l'Empire.

Certes, on ne saurait affirmer que cette institution puisse suffire par elle-même à régénérer l'Empire Ottoman. Mais il est permis d'espérer que, par sa composition même et par les garanties dont elle serait entourée, elle pourrait remédier à quelques-uns des abus signalés plus haut. Appelé à exercer un pouvoir politique supérieur, ce Conseil ne saurait être formé que d'éléments indigènes. Les fonctionnaires civils et militaires, ayant occupé les plus hauts charges de l'État, et les chefs des communautés non-Musulmanes de l'Empire sont appelés de droit à en faire partie. Jouissant du privilège de l'inamovibilité ils échapperont peut-être mieux que d'autres à des influences néfastes et l'on peut espérer qu'ils trouveront dans la sécurité de leur charge un encouragement à remplir leur devoirs avec ce sentiment d'indépendance qu'on ne rencontre malheureusement plus aujourd'hui que chez bien peu de fonctionnaires.

Le Sultan n'aura aucune raison de redouter une assemblée composée de ceux que sa volonté souveraine a déjà appelés aux plus hautes charges de l'État; et il faut espérer que la population indigène ne leur refusera pas sa confiance.

Si, dès le début, le Conseil Suprême sait comprendre son rôle, le contrôle permanent qu'il devra exercer sur les services Financiers, Administratifs, et Judiciaires et la part qu'il sera appelé à prendre dans la désignation des Valis et des fonctionnaires pourront mettre un certain frein à ce régime de faveur qui a faussé tous les rouages de l'Administration.

Les Ambassadeurs ont examiné avec soin la situation financière. Pour la première fois depuis de longues années, le Gouvernement Ottoman a publié un Budget. Il y a lieu de tenir compte de l'intention que révèle cette publication et d'y voir le désir de jeter quelque lumière sur l'état des finances Ottomanes. Mais l'étude de ce Budget permet de constater que ses prévisions ne reposent sur aucun fondement sérieux.

D'après la Sublime Porte il se solderait par un excédent de recettes de £ T. 81,912.

Or, un examen rigoureux des chiffres prévus en recettes et en dépenses, des augmentations et des économies proposées permet d'affirmer que loin d'offrir un excédent, ce Budget présentera un déficit de 2 à 3 millions de livres Turques, sans compter les arriérés, dont le montant est inconnu.

Les Ambassadeurs ont reconnu qu'il était impossible au Gouvernement Ottoman de faire face à ses engagements, et d'équilibrer, dès à présent, son Budget, soit à l'aide d'augmentation d'impôts, soit en opérant des réductions dans ses dépenses. Ils ont envisagé l'éventualité d'un emprunt dont les versements, échelonnés sur plusieurs années, permettraient de combler les déficits, jusqu'à ce que les effets d'une sérieuse réforme financière aient pu se faire sentir, et que l'équilibre entre les recettes ordinaires et les dépenses ordinaires ait été définitivement établi.

Mais préoccupés avant tout d'épargner au Trésor Ottoman des charges nouvelles, ils se sont demandé quel gage pourrait être affecté à un nouvel emprunt sans diminution des ressources actuels du Budget.

Leur attention a été attirée sur une combinaison qui consisterait à affecter à ce gage la dotation actuelle de l'amortissement extraordinaire de la Dette Publique Ottomane. L'abandon de cette dotation par les créanciers de la Turquie constituerait un sacrifice qui pourrait être compensé par une garantie des Puissances conçue de telle façon qu'elle n'impliquerait jamais la moindre responsabilité financière.

Mais il n'appartenait pas aux Ambassadeurs de se prononcer définitivement sur des questions aussi spéciales. Il leur a paru seulement qu'il importait de mettre la situation budgétaire au clair, et de constituer à cet effet un Conseil Financier offrant toute sécurité au point de vue de l'indépendance et de la compétence.

Il aurait un caractère Ottoman, et serait constitué par le Sultan, mais les Puissances y participeraient, dans des conditions qui, sans porter la moindre atteinte à l'indépendance financière ou politique de la Turquie, offriraient les plus sérieuses garanties.

Ce Conseil, composé en nombre égal de membres Ottomans et Européens, ces derniers proposés par les Grandes Puissances, vérifierait la situation du Trésor, réformerait l'Administration Financière, établirait un Budget régulier et en contrôlerait l'exécution. Il déciderait s'il y a lieu de recourir à un emprunt, et se prononcerait sur le moyen le plus avantageux de le contracter.

Dans le cas où le concours des Puissances serait nécessaire à cette opération, des

Délégués des Ambassades seraient adjoints au Conseil pour surveiller l'emploi des fonds à provenir de l'emprunt.

Les Ambassadeurs sont d'avis que, pour ne pas augmenter outre mesure le nombre des membres de ce Conseil, il suffirait de le composer de six membres, dont trois Ottomans et trois Européens. Pour la désignation de ces derniers à l'agrément du Sultan, les Six Grandes Puissance pourraient se partager en trois groupes qui désigneraient chacun leur candidat.

La mauvaise administration dont souffrent les populations Musulmanes et Chrétiennes dans l'intérieur de l'Empire a été également l'objet de l'attention de la réunion des Ambassadeurs.

A côté des causes générales indiquées plus haut, on peut en grande partie l'attribuer à la non-application des lois existantes. Aussi, pour remédier au mal, n'était-il pas besoin d'édicter de nouveaux Règlements administratifs; mais il était indispensable et suffisant tout à la fois, de rappeler les principales dispositions de ces lois sur les points essentiels de l'Administration provinciale. Ce sont pour les six vilayets orientaux de l'Asie-Mineure les mesures édictées par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan en 1895, et pour le reste de l'Empire les dispositions législatives promulguées dans ces deux dernières années et dont un résumé a été établi par les Ambassadeurs.

Il importait alors, et c'était l'essentiel, d'assurer l'exécution de ces lois. L'expérience ayant démontré que, par suite des abus enracinés, des résistances injustifiées de certaines populations ou de diverses circonstances locales, ce but ne pourrait être atteint que par une action énergique et soutenue du Gouvernement et par une surveillance locale minutieuse, les Représentants des Grandes Puissances estiment que l'exécution des réformes doit être confiée à deux Hauts Commissaires Impériaux, et que des Commissions composées de Délégués Européens doivent être appelés à en surveiller sur place l'application.

S'il a paru juste en effet de réservor à l'élément Ottoman les hauts fonctions du Gouvernment et la charge du contrôle suprême il est indispensable d'utiliser dans le détail de l'administration et dans la surveillance de la marche des services dans les provinces, le concours de l'élément Européen. Le Gouvernement Ottoman a constamment fait appel, de sa propre initiative, aux lumières de fonctionnaires étrangers; et Sa Majesté Impériale elle-même cherche en ce moment à s'attacher le concours de quelques spécialistes civils et militaires d'Europe.

C'est en vertu même de ce principe que les Représentants des Grandes Puissances jugent indispensable de confier la surveillance de l'application des réformes à deux Commissions composées de Délégués Européens. L'une d'elles opérera dans la Turquie d'Europe et l'autre dans la Turquie d'Asie. Leur mission sera de s'enquérir des dispositions prises par le Haut Commissaire Impérial et les autorités provinciales pour l'exécution des mesures prévues, de rechercher les causes qui y mettraient obstacle, d'indiquer les moyens d'y remédier, et, d'une manière générale, d'étudier l'état et les besoins des populations.

Pour faire œuvre utile et efficace, il est à souhaiter que ces Commissions puissent accomplir leurs travaux dans les meilleures conditions de tranquillité et de sécurité publique. A cet effet, il sera nécessaire que le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman use de tous les moyens en son pouvoir pour assurer au préalable la pacification des esprits, qu'il accepte franchement les réformes, qu'il en impose l'application loyale à tous ses fonctionnaires, et qu'il sache réprimer toute velléité nouvelle de cette agitation qu'il a laissée en 1895 et 1896 se propager parmi la population Musulmane d'Anatolie. Il est également très désirable, en ce qui concerne les vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, que les influences auxquelles les populations Macédoniennes sont toujours sensibles s'exercent comme par le passé en faveur du maintien de la tranquillité dans ces régions frontières de l'Europe. On peut espérer que le concours direct prêté par des Délégués Européens à cette œuvre de réorganisation administrative inspirera aux populations de l'Empire une confiance justifiée.

Il a paru téméraire de songer à une réforme complète de la justice. Il est vrai qu'en dépit des promesses faites par les Sultans depuis un demi-siècle et des principes inscrits dans les lois, l'inégalité des Chrétiens de l'Empire Ottoman devant la justice demeure flagrante. Ce vice tient malheureusement plus aux mœurs qu'aux lois. Celles-ci ne sont pas mauvaises, mais leur pratique est généralement détestable. Une refonte de ces lois se serait heurtée à des difficultés de toutes sortes et risquerait de soulever une redoutable question religieuse. Le mal provenant la plupart du temps du mauvais recrutement du personnel judiciaire, c'est la réforme de ce personnel qu'il a semblé avant tout utile d'entreprendre. En s'adjoignant, pour l'élaboration d'un Règlement sur l'entrée et sur l'avancement dans la carrière judiciaire, de membres du

Barreau de Constantinople, on a eu principalement en vue de s'adresser aux lumières de personalités dont l'indépendance est connue et auxquelles leur relations avec les Missions étrangères donneront une réelle autorité dans la discussion de ce Règlement.

Il en est de même du personnel de la police, dont l'insuffisance et l'indignité ont été particulièrement mises en relief au cours des derniers événements. Une réorganisation radicale est indispensable, si l'on veut assurer le respect de la liberté individuelle et couper court aux pratiques arbitraires et brutales des agents. Une Direction Européenne seule pourra déraciner les abus anciens.

Les services municipaux fonctionnent aujourd'hui d'une manière déplorable. Les taxes municipales sont gaspillées ou détournées de leur destination, et la mauvaise tenue comme l'insécurité des villes en Turquie sont proverbiales.

En 1858 un essai de municipalité internationale avait été tenté à Péra (6e Cercle de Constantinople). Les Ambassades avaient consenti alors au paiement des taxes par leurs nationaux, et cette institution, recrutée parmi les indigènes et parmi les étrangers, avait donné de bons résultats. Les seuls travaux de voirie, d'hygiène, et d'embellissement de Péra datent de cette époque. La Municipalité de la ville ne dura malheureusement que quelques années. Il suffira de remettre en vigueur la loi qui réglait d'une manière très satisfaisante sa composition, son fonctionnement, et ses attributions, et d'assurer la publication officielle de ses délibérations. Cette organisation devra s'étendre progressivement à toutes les grandes villes.

Enfin, bien qu'il ne soit pas dans les habitudes de l'esprit public en Turquie de traiter ouvertement des affaires de l'État, et qu'il soit préférable de ne point accorder à la presse un droit illimité de discussion dont elle ne saurait pas faire usage, il est indispensable de soustraire les journaux à ce régime de compression et de communiqués officiels qui jettent trop souvent le ridicule sur la presse Ottomane. Il n'est pas sans utilité de lui laisser une latitude que la Loi sur la Presse lui accordait, mais que le régime provisoire établi par le Règlement de 1867 a suspendue jusqu'à ce jour. Le retour à la Loi de 1865 s'impose.

Telles sont les conclusions essentielles du travail auquel se sont livrés les Représentants des Grandes Puissances.

Ils n'ont assurément pas la prétention d'avoir trouvé une recette pour la régénération de l'Empire Ottoman. Le mal dont souffre la Turquie est de ceux qu'on peut atténuer, mais qu'on ne guérit pas. Il s'agit à l'heure présente de conjurer une des crises les plus redoutables qu'ait traversées l'Empire, de prévenir une catastrophe et garantir pour quelque temps au moins cette intégrité dont toutes les Puissances reconnaissent la nécessité. Sans chercher à faire d'innovations, les Ambassadeurs se sont efforcés de tirer le meilleur parti possible des moyens dont ils disposaient.

Les Colonies étrangères se sentent menacées dans leur sécurité, leurs intérêts, les Chrétiens réclament depuis longtemps une amélioration à la situation qui leur est faite. Les Musulmans sollicitent de plus en plus l'assistance de l'Europe, s'avouant incapables d'arrêter par eux-mêmes l'Empire Ottoman dans la voie qui le conduit à la ruine.

Si les mesures proposées sont exécutées avec quelque bonne foi, si l'Europe tient la main à ce qu'elles soient appliquées sans retard, et se montre énergique et persévérante dans l'accomplissement du mandat que d'impérieuses nécessités lui confèrent, Musulmans et Chrétiens y trouveront l'occasion de se relever.

Il est essentiel de noter que toutes les propositions des Représentants des Grandes Puissances se lient, et s'enchaînent, qu'à leur avis le Sultan devra les accepter et les appliquer dans leur totalité.

On peut d'ailleurs penser que ces vues répondent aux nécessités de la situation et à la conviction intime de Sa Majesté Impériale elle-même, puisque, dans son désir de se soustraire aux exigences et à la pression des Cabinets de l'Europe et de prévenir leurs décisions, le Sultan vient de faire annoncer un série de mesures qui présentent de grandes analogies avec celles que les Représentants des Grandes Puissances ont jugées les meilleures.

Mais il convient d'ajouter que tout ce que Sa Majesté elle-même tente de faire par elle-même se trouve d'avance frappé de stérilité. Les derniers événements ont laissé subsister des doutes trop profonds sur ses véritables intentions. Par contre, les mêmes mesures, une fois proposées par les Puissances, se trouvent emprunter une toute autre valeur.

Des institutions soutenues par l'Europe peuvent seules offrir assez de garanties pour donner quelque confiance dans leur efficacité.

No. 121.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 89. Secret.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 10, 1897.*

WITH reference to my Secret despatch No. 88 of this day's date, I have the honour to state that the Ambassadors have agreed to ask their respective Governments to make no separate or isolated communication to the Turkish Government or its Representatives respecting the proposals, and to keep them secret until they are presented to the Sultan. We have, further, the honour to request that the collective report which accompanies the proposals may be considered as a confidential document.

The question of the employment of coercive measures to enforce the acceptance of the proposals has not been discussed at our meetings, as we considered it to be beyond our province, but the opinion appeared to be unanimously entertained that the Sultan would yield if he knew for certain that coercion would be applied, but not otherwise. My colleagues also appeared to take it for granted that the Powers recognized the necessity of enforcing their demands.

I endeavoured, on several occasions, to obtain from my colleagues an opinion as to the mode in which the communication should be made to the Sultan. I urged the necessity of demanding, within a fixed period, some definite act by which the Sultan should signify his consent, such as the issue of a Hatt, the communication to the Powers of a note, or the appointment of high functionaries with full powers to carry out the reforms in concert with the Ambassadors. I considered this outward sign of the adoption of the reforms as essential in order to avoid the endless subterfuges and evasions of which the Sultan is such a master. I was not, however, able to elicit more than a general acquiescence on the part of the other Ambassadors.

M. de Nédilow is in favour of giving the Sultan an opportunity of issuing the reforms *proprio motu*. Before an official demand is made, he would communicate the proposals privately to His Majesty, and give him a delay of three or four days to promulgate them in a Hatt. I consider that there would be serious inconvenience in such a mode of proceeding. The Sultan would at once take advantage of this overture to put forward innumerable reasons for delay, and if once the subterranean communications between the Palace and the Embassies are reopened, there is great danger of their being made the means of creating misunderstandings between the Representatives.

In my opinion, all communications on the subject of the proposals should pass through the Porte.

This would not make it impossible, if it was desired to spare the Sultan's feelings, to communicate the demands of the Powers privately to the Foreign Minister in the first instance, and to fix a date for their official communication, in case the action which we may agree to consider as the test of the Sultan's acceptance had not been previously taken.

But I consider it essential that the document formulating the joint demands of the Powers should be drawn up in a formal shape before any communication is made to the Sultan or his Government, and that he should only be allowed to escape its formal presentation by spontaneously giving whatever pledges of his acceptance may have been agreed upon.

M. de Nédilow did not succeed in obtaining the support of his colleagues for his suggestion, but he has recommended it to his own Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 122.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 90.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 9, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the state of the vilayet and the deplorable condition of the finances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 122.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)

Sir, *Van, January 24, 1897.*

I REGRET to have to inform you that a small branch of the Tashnak Society has again been organized in Van. Demands for money, coupled with threats of assassination in case of non-compliance, have been sent to a prominent Armenian banker, and to one or two others.

The Bishop and several of the Notables have consulted me privately as to what should be done. I have advised the Bishop to use all his influence to keep them quiet, and to tell the leader, who is well known, that if any outrages take place he will be at once arrested. It is a very great pity that some means cannot be found to compel the real leaders, who are now in Tiflis, to put a stop to this idiotically criminal conduct; for I cannot see how the state of the Christians is to be improved while this agitation continues.

Mr. Thesiger has just come back from a trip into Persia. He tells me that Khir and Salamas are full of revolutionists, who are the virtual masters of the place. From all I can learn, they appear to have abandoned for the present their idea of an autonomous State; but at the same time, no possible scheme of reforms seems likely to satisfy them. These men are no patriots, and are struggling for their own personal advantage, and care nothing for the sufferings of their unfortunate fellow-countrymen.

As for the scheme of reforms, forty-five nahiés have been planned, and will shortly be formed. The dearth of money is, however, pressing with ever-increasing force, and neutralizes all effort in the direction of reform. £ T. 2,000 has to be provided monthly for the troops. The extra charges involved by the scheme of reforms comes to £ T. 300 per month, without counting the salaries, &c., of the village watchmen. Instead of reducing the already redundant Executive, new officials are appointed daily, who do nothing but swell the crowd who clamour to be paid.

This want of money recoils on the head of the wretched villagers, whose state is most pitiable. I refer here of course to the Armenians. The Turkish villagers can protect themselves, while the Kurds in most cases refuse to pay any taxes whatever. The Vali issued orders that no taxes were to be taken from any family where there were not four measures of corn per head, as well as the amount necessary for seed. These orders are not obeyed. The zaptiehs and officials are themselves in a state of the greatest penury, and it is not in human nature that they should not squeeze out all they can. Seeing the futility of this order, the Vali has, at my request, excepted absolutely the Kayas of Hijisch and Shattakh, together with seven other villages, from all taxes until next harvest. This was the most I could ask for, but I need hardly point out that there are not half-a-dozen Armenian villages in the vilayet which are honestly in a condition to pay any taxes whatever. I now find myself in some instances obliged to help families, who, but for the tax-gathering zaptiehs, would have got through the winter all right. I cannot say too much in praise of the Vali, though I wish he were a little stronger; but what can he do?

As for the Budget, which has just been published at Constantinople, it has been, as far as this vilayet is concerned, compiled on the assumption of normal tithes and taxes this year.

I do not believe that by any possibility can the tithes next year amount to more than 25 per cent. of those collected this year. The other taxes must also show a great shrinkage, and the endeavour to pay them must result in hanging a still greater

burden of debt round the necks of these poor people. The truth of the matter is, that things have got to such a pass, that but little can by any means be squeezed out of the people next year. It would be both politic and wise to accept the fact, and to remit the tithes altogether next year, for both Christian and Moslem. The loss of this money would be but a drop in the ocean if the finances are to be reformed; while the effect of such a remission would be far-reaching, and tend much to restore a better feeling between the two races.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 123.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 15.)

(No. 91.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 9, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 38 of the 15th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis respecting the progress made with the execution of the reforms in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 123.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)
Sir, *Bitlis, January* 16, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to report that, according to information which I have received from Mush, there are now sixty Armenian gendarmes actually on duty in that sandjak, and some Christian Mudirs appear to have been elected in the same sandjak, but not to have yet entered upon the performance of their duties.

I have heard of but the one Christian Mudir having been elected in the Sandjak of Bitlis. He is now performing his duties as Mudir with a Kurdish assistant.

The Vali says that the arrangements for nahiés are complete all over the vilayet, with the exception that secretaries are wanted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 124.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received February* 15.)

(No. 92.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 9, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 7th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem respecting the transfer of the property of the Russian Palestine Society to the name of the Imperial Russian Government.

Mr. Dickson incloses a list of the buildings and lands affected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 124.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, January* 26, 1897.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 5th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that a Vizirial order was recently received by the Mutessarif of Jerusalem,

instructing his Excellency to authorize the transfer of all the landed property belonging to the Russian Palestine Society and Ecclesiastical Mission in Palestine to the name of the Imperial Russian Government, and adding that a similar order had been issued as regards the property situated within the district of Acre.

Most of the land possessed by the Ecclesiastical Mission, of which the Russian Palestine Society forms a part, was purchased by the late Russian Archimandrite Antonin, as reported by Mr. Acting Consul Jones in his despatch No. 30 of the 1st October 1896, and I now beg to inclose herewith a list showing the number of buildings and lands owned by the Society and Mission in different parts of Palestine. In the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, close to one of the city gates, the Russian buildings, as they are generally styled, most of which have been authorized by Firman, cover an area of ground measuring very nearly 60 acres in extent, and on the Mount of Olives the property owned by the Mission is not very much less in size.

All these properties are now to be registered in the name of the Russian Government, and this step will not only cause them to be exempt from taxation, but will give the Russian Government a claim to interfere in the affairs of this province which, in future, will have to be weighed against the traditional interests of France.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 124.

List of Russian Properties in Palestine.

Locality.	Nature of Property.
Jerusalem	(*a.*) *Inside the city wall*— 1 hospice with church attached. 1 piece of land on Mount Bezetha. (*b.*) *Outside the city wall*—there are different plots of land covering 223 dounoms, or about 56 acres, on which are built the following edifices:— 1 cathedral. 1 hospital. 1 mission house with church attached. 1 house for the Consulate and residence of the Consul-General (Government property). 1 house for residence of staff of Consulate-General (Government property). 4 hospices for pilgrims (two for men and two for women).
Mount of Olives ..	2 churches. 1 clergy house. 1 hospice for pilgrims.
Bethlehem	1 piece of land in the vicinity of the Church of the Nativity.
Beit-Jala	1 school for girls with chapel attached.
Ain-Karim (St. John's)..	1 church. 2 hospices for pilgrims. 1 clergy house.
Hebron	1 hospice for pilgrims.
Jericho	1 hospice for pilgrims.
Jaffa	An orange garden outside Jaffa, within which are built:— 1 church 1 clergy house. 1 hospice for pilgrims.
Nazareth	1 school for boys. 1 school for girls.
Tiberias	1 large plot of land.
Caiffa	1 piece of land.

No. 125.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 93.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, February 9, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 58 of the 26th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, reporting the number of prisoners, both Mussulmans and Armenians, who have been released under the terms of the general amnesty in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 125.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 38.)
Sir,
Sivas, January 24, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that in the Province of Sivas 170 Armenians have been released from prison. There are also seven Armenians in hiding, condemned in default, and the Vali informed me that the amnesty would be extended to them, should they surrender. The Vali states that no Armenian charged with a political crime is now in prison. On the other hand, the Armenians claim that there are about twenty-five imprisoned for political reasons still in prison. The difficulty in deciding is that these men were charged with a political, but condemned for a non-political, offence, the accusation being altered. I propose inquiring into the details of each case before making further representations.

Fifty Mussulmans were released from Sivas prison to-day, in accordance with an order directing all who had completed half their sentence to be set at liberty. In the province altogether about ninety Mussulmans will be released.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 126.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 94.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, February 9, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship three despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the murder of the Christian Muavin to the Kaïmakam of Charsanjak.

I have already made representations to the Porte on the subject, and have urged that a searching inquiry be made at Kharput.

I have also invited my colleagues to support the steps I have taken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 126.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 2.)
Sir,
Kharput, January 4, 1897.

IN confirmation of my telegram of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency, with great regret, the murder of Bogos Effendi Tutoyan, the Christian Muavin recently nominated to the Kaïmakam of the Charsanjak Caza, who resides at Peri, where the murder in question took place.

Two Armenians who have just arrived from Peri give the following account of the affair.

Bogos Effendi was living in the house of an Armenian, who was the only other occupant. Last Wednesday night the Muavin and his landlord, who were alone in the house at the time, retired as usual each of them to his own bed-room. The following morning Bogos Effendi was found dead in his bed, and covered with wounds inflicted, apparently, with a knife or dagger. A door opening upon a balcony on the first floor and overhanging the street had been broken open, so that it is to be inferred that the assassin had reached the balcony by means of a ladder.

Eight Armenians have been arrested in connection with the outrage, among them being the landlord alluded to and six Protestant members of the Relief Commission organized at Peri by the agent at Kharput of the British and American Relief Committees, but up till last Friday no Mussulman had been placed under arrest.

In an interview I had with the Vali this afternoon, Raouf Bey assured me that he was causing the strictest inquiry to be made into this deplorable incident, which distressed him, he said, very deeply; and at my request he telegraphed orders to the Kaïmakam of the Charsanjak to report by telegram the names of the persons now imprisoned under suspicion of complicity in the affair, and to himself see that any relief funds which might be in the personal possession of the Armenians under restraint should be held in trust for them pending their release from gaol.

Bogos Effendi Tutoyan was one of seven brothers, six of whom have perished by violence. Two of them were massacred at Malattia and two others at Eghin during the disturbances in those towns. The fifth hung himself through terror and despair soon after the outbreak at Kharput. The only survivor among the seven now is a Professor in the Armenian college at Erzeroum.

Their mother is still living, and resides at Mezreh.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 126.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir,
Kharput, January 21, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 to your Excellency of the 4th instant and telegram of the 10th instant, reporting upon the murder of Bogos Effendi Tutoyan, late Muavin to the Kaïmakam of the Charsanjak, and submitting the necessity for the transfer of the trial of the persons arrested in consequence thereof from Peri to Kharput, I now have the honour to report such information as has reached me from various sources with regard to the circumstances attendant upon the crime in question.

The Armenian proprietor of the house where Bogos Effendi was residing is now under arrest, together with upwards of twenty other Armenians, many of whom are Protestants. He has privately asserted, I am informed, that his house was broken into by nine Moslems (two or three of whom were zaptiehs), who threatened to kill him should he make the least noise or attempt to protect the Muavin. The band then proceeded to break open the door of the room occupied by Bogos Effendi, which he had locked upon hearing the sound of their footsteps outside. They set upon him

with knives, and after a long struggle, during which the Armenian offered a furious and determined resistance, finally succeeded in stabbing him to death.

The following day the houses of several Armenians were searched, and certain marks on the walls were found, which appear to have excited suspicion. The plaster under these marks was chipped away, and the pieces were sealed up and sent to Kharput for medical inspection. A number of books belonging to the Protestant pastor at Peri were seized and taken to the konak.

The landlord of Bogos Effendi's house is alleged to have stated that if he is brought to Kharput he will disclose the names of the murderers, but that it would be as much as his life is worth to do so at Peri. The other Armenians arrested under charge of complicity in the affair are also desirous, it appears, of undergoing their trial at the chief town of the vilayet.

The mother of the deceased seems willing to petition for the transfer of the trial referred to, but neither the Public Prosecutor nor the accused will venture, I fear, to prefer a similar demand; and even should they do so, the case might very likely be referred to the Khozat Criminal Court, in which event the change of venue would be futile.

The Kaimakam of the Charsanjak is accused by Armenians of having connived at the assassination of his assistant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 3 in No. 126.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Kharput, January 27, 1897.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 6 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that, according to statements made to me by Armenians who have just arrived here from Peri, ten Christians still remain in prison there under suspicion of having been concerned in the murder of the Muavin to the Charsanjak Kaimakam.

The prisoners names are:—
Nalbanjian Stepan and his son Mardiros.
The Protestant Pastor Asvasadur.
Berber Simon.
Essayan Serkis, landlord of the house where Bogos Effendi was staying.
Marabon Oglon Garabet and his son Stepan, together with three female relations of the above.

A Kurd named Mullah Khaya has also been arrested in connection with the affair.

My informants state that the Mudir of the Telegraph Office at Peri had invited the Kaimakam, Arslan Bey, Ismaili Sulo Bey, with the Muavin and other officials to dine at his house on the evening when the murder was committed. The guests separated at 4 o'clock Turkish; and Bogos Effendi being asked where he was going replied that he must return home, as he had letters to write.

Three hours later his house was broken into, and he was assassinated. Nine men surrounded his dwelling, three of whom were zaptiehs, *i.e.*, Zilfo, Bekish Chaush, and Onbashi Yusouf. These zaptiehs guarded the street whilst the other six men, among whom were Demirjili Mullah, Perili Ali, and Ismaili Sulo Bey's servant Rasso burst open the street-door of Essayan Serkis' residence and murdered Bogos Effendi, whose shrieks were heard by Armenians at a considerable distance. The zaptiehs in question, however, paid no attention to the noise.

The Kaimakam of Peri, together with the two Beys referred to, are accused of having plotted the Muavin's death, and of having commissioned Mullah, Ali, and Rasso to perpetrate the crime.

Essayan Serkis, whom the murderers threatened to kill, is alleged to have recognized these three men.

A Commission formed of a Binbashi, a member of the Administrative Council named Avedis Effendi, and the Assistant Public Prosecutor was subsequently sent from Khozat to inquire into the affair. They found marks on the walls of the Protestant pastor's and other Armenian houses, which they caused to be chipped off and examined.

The Armenians under arrest, whose names are specified above, are said to have been offered their liberty, with the exception of Nalbanjian Stepan and the Protestant pastor, upon condition of their incriminating those two persons. The prison at Peri is too small, I am assured, to accommodate all the prisoners therein, among whom are a number of Kurds, at whose hands the females alluded to are subject to constant annoyance.

The only hope of the truth being brought to light would appear to lie in the transfer of the trial to Kharput, more especially as the Peri Kaimakam himself seems to have been chiefly responsible for the murder of his assistant.

The body of the murdered man was found to have received thirteen wounds, several of which had been inflicted apparently by knives, and the remainder by "shish" or poignards, such as are ordinarily carried by Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 127.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 95.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 10, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora respecting the intentions of the Government as to the Druse exiles at Angora.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Angora, February 3, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, of the 570 Druse exiles now in Angora (a further contingent of 210 having arrived here a short time ago, in addition to the 360 referred to by Mr. Richards in his despatch No. 118 of the 7th December, 1896, to your Excellency), some 150 men, women, and children were sent yesterday under escort to Cæsarea, in pursuance, I understand, of instructions to that effect from Constantinople.

The intention of the Turkish Government with regard to these Druses would seem to be that they shall gradually, under pressure of poverty, disappear among the surrounding Turkish population. This, at least, was the impression gathered by me from the observations of the Governor-General, Tewfik Pasha, who, in a conversation I had with him respecting these exiles, informed me that it was not proposed to allow them to pursue their old occupation as agriculturists, and on my thereupon inquiring how in that case they were to live, stated that a sum of 2 piastres per individual per diem had been allotted to them by the Government as sustenance money. They would, his Excellency further informed me, be distributed through the various centres of the vilayet, such as Cæsarea, Tchorum, &c., but would, as heretofore, be kept under police surveillance.

Under these circumstances, unless after a certain period a general pardon is granted by the Government to these Druses, I hardly see how they can escape the contingency I have referred to above. In any case, as the majority appear to be without means of any kind, their sufferings are likely to be very great if the sustenance

money, which, though not large individually, amounts in the aggregate to a charge of some 70*l.* per week on the revenues of the vilayet, should cease to be forthcoming. It is, however, only fair to the Turkish authorities to say that there are no signs of these exiles being harshly treated; and it is, further, a most fortunate circumstance for them that the present winter is, I am informed, one of the mildest experienced at Angora for many years past.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 128.

Sir N. O'Conor to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 15.)

(No. 26. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, February 9, 1897.*

AS I was on the point of taking leave of Count Mouravieff this afternoon, his Excellency asked me if the Turks had lately made any fresh overtures to Her Majesty's Government in the sense that they would be guided solely by their advice upon condition of getting their support in their present difficulties.

I replied that I was not aware of any recent communication of the sort, but I knew that somewhat similar overtures had been made to the Representatives of several Powers some weeks ago by the orders of the Sultan, and I knew that Her Majesty's Ambassador had replied that he could not consider any proposals separately from his colleagues.

Count Mouravieff said that he knew of the overtures to which I alluded, and he reminded me that we had talked about them before he left for Copenhagen. He was now, however, alluding to quite recent propositions, and he would tell me confidentially, for your Lordship's information, that upon his return here last Wednesday the Turkish Ambassador called upon him, and, by order of the Sultan, renewed the overtures which had been already proposed and rejected.

He had given Husni Pasha the same answer that M. de Nélidow had given at Constantinople. It was in the sense of Sir Philip Currie's reply, and he hoped it would be a useful lesson to the Sultan, and show him that the Powers were determined to act in common accord.

He did not conceal from himself the fact that the Sultan was in a very difficult position, but he could not admit, as had been suggested to him, that the inquiry and recommendations of the Ambassadors should be considerably limited in their scope and extent. He had replied that this was now too late, and that they must accept and force upon the Sultan as far as possible the recommendations of the Ambassadors.

I rather expected his Excellency to make some allusion to the Egyptian question, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's speech, which has been the subject of fruitful, and by no means friendly, comment in the Russian press, as well as on the Stock Exchange, but he did not make any reference to the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

P.S.—The telegraphic report of Sir M. Hicks-Beach's speech of the 9th instant on the Egyptian question having made a considerable impression on the Stock Exchange, I requested Mr. Michell to make a précis of the articles in the Russian press on the subject, and do myself the honour of inclosing it herewith."

N. R. O'C.

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* Not printed.

No. 129.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. Rumbold.

(No. 24 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February 16, 1897.*

COUNT DEYM called to-day and said that he had reported to Count Goluchowski the statement which I made to him in the conversation recorded in my despatch to your Excellency No. 18 of the 5th ultimo, to the effect that I should be willing that the question of the methods of coercion to be employed, if the Sultan should refuse the reforms proposed to him, should be discussed by the Ambassadors at Constantinople in case the Austro-Hungarian Government preferred that mode of procedure to a discussion between the various Governments.

Count Goluchowski had replied that he left it to me to take the course I considered best in the matter.

Count Deym added, however, that he supposed that the question of reforms in the Turkish Administration must stand over till the Cretan question had been brought nearer to a solution.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 130.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 17.)

(No. 28. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, February 17, 1897.*

TURKISH reforms.

M. Hanotaux has not yet consulted his colleagues or his staff with regard to the proposals of the Ambassadors, though he has examined them himself.

His Excellency's opinion, which is strictly personal, is that, taking them in their entirety, they ought to be accepted at once, and without alteration.

But in confiding this view to me, he does so in order to have your Lordship's opinion at the earliest moment, and has no intention of taking any initiative.

Some people, it is quite likely, will consider alterations desirable, but should discussion of such changes once commence, inevitable delays would ensue; and if the Six Powers agree within a reasonable time to the whole project, his Excellency is convinced that their promptitude of action in recommending them at Constantinople would carry increased weight.

M. Hanotaux begged me to explain that these are his own strictly personal views, and that in exchange he hoped to receive those of your Lordship. He is not now speaking in the name of the French Government.

No. 131.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 18.)

Sir, *Downing Street, February 17, 1897.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you, for the information of the Marquess of Salisbury, with reference to my letter of the 9th instant, the accompanying copy of a further despatch from the High Commissioner for Cyprus, reporting that a party of Druses had shipped at Famagusta on a vessel bound for the Syrian coast.

I am, &c.
(Signed) R. H. MEADE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 131.

Sir W. Sendall to Mr. Chamberlain.

(Confidential.)

Government House, Cyprus, January 28, 1897.

Sir,

SINCE writing my Confidential despatch of the 22nd January it has been reported to me that a batch of thirty-six Druses were, at their own urgent entreaty, shipped at Famagusta on the 15th on board a vessel bound for the Syrian coast in the hope of being able to reach their own country in safety.

2. It seems probable, however, from rumours which have since reached Cyprus, that they have been captured by the Turkish authorities. See annexed copy of a letter from Mr. Cobham to Captain Young.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER J. SENDALL,
High Commissioner.

Inclosure 2 in No. 131.

Mr. Cobham to Captain Young.

Larnaca, January 27, 1897.

My dear Young,

I AM sorry to say that a rumour of to-day from Beyrout says that the vessel "Paphos," Ali Hassein, master, which left Famagusta with thirty-six Druses on board on the night of the 15th January, was taken by a Turkish dispatch-boat about half-an-hour's sail from the Syrian coast, and carried off to Beyrout.

It seems that they might have made Joani in safety, but the Druses insisted on rounding some point so as to land nearer their homes. Two boatmen here, Hadji Khalid and Mehmet, are said to have telegraphed the news of their intended departure to the authorities at Beyrout. The master will probably lose his vessel, and be imprisoned as well. I am very sorry.

I am, &c.

(Signed) C. DELAVAL COBHAM.

No. 132.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 122. Secret.)

Paris, February 19, 1897.

My Lord,

THE day before yesterday M. Hanotaux referred to the Ambassadors' project of reforms, saying that he had looked pretty carefully through it, but had not yet consulted either his colleagues or his departmental subordinates in regard to it.

He had, however, himself arrived at the opinion that, taking them in their *ensemble*, they were of a nature to merit being accepted without alteration as soon as possible.

In saying this, he did not mean it to be inferred that he thought them perfect. Upon close examination and consideration, it is probable that every Government might find suggestions to make, which might be more or less desirable and advantageous. He did not, however, believe that such alterations as might be proposed would be so eminently beneficial as to make it worth while for the six Governments to set to work and tinker up the project here and there with amendments of their own. The Ambassadors had known what they were about, and he felt it to be extremely doubtful whether the home Governments would be wise to introduce alterations on the idea that they would improve the scheme.

Be this as it may, his reason for advocating an early—he might almost say an immediate—acceptance of the project, is that such promptness would have a very great effect upon the Sultan. The delays inseparable from discussion between the Governments would impair this effect, and on this account he personally is of opinion that the sooner the reforms are recommended for the Sultan's acceptance the better.

He wished me to let your Lordship know this at once, but to be careful to explain at the same time that he spoke only for himself, and not in the name of the French Government, and that he did so chiefly with the object of eliciting your Lordship's own opinion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 133.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 101.)

Constantinople, February 11, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting an attack made by a Kurd on an Armenian boy, and the energy displayed by the Christian Muavin to the Vali on that occasion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 133.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)

Kharput, January 25, 1897.

Sir,

WITH great pleasure I have the honour to report to your Excellency the part played by the Vali's Assistant, Stepan Effendi Doghramajian, in connection with an incident which occurred to-day at Mezreh.

A Kurd whom I have employed, at various times, to attend to the roof of my house quarrelled, it seems, with an Armenian lad of about 15 years of age, and came to blows with him in one of the main streets of this town. The Kurd threw the boy down and proceeded to kick him about the body and even the face, which bled profusely. A zaptieh who was standing close by at the time remained inert, looking calmly on. Stepan Effendi, however, happening to arrive upon the scene at that moment, shouted to the zaptieh to seize the Kurd, but the man took no notice. Thereupon the Muavin ran up and dealt the Kurd a sound blow in the face, which caused him to fall back.

The Mudir of the Regie here (a Mussulman), who was passing by, ordered the zaptieh to arrest the Kurd and take him to the Bin Bashi, and he was at once obeyed.

This incident may serve to illustrate, I would submit, the apathy of the Turkish police in general as far as concerns the protection of the Armenian subjects of the Sultan, and the utter disregard evinced by them for orders given by any Armenian official, however high that official's rank may be.

I shall endeavour to ascertain the name of the zaptieh referred to and report his conduct, in this instance, to the Vali.

Stepan Effendi is advanced in years and of short stature; and considering the difficulties to which his position exposes him, his isolation among his Turkish colleagues, and the fact of an Armenian Muavin having been murdered very recently in this vilayet, his courage in acting as he did is deserving of appreciation and praise.

I fear, however, that the energy thus displayed by the Muavin in protecting one of his own creed may fail to elicit the approval either of the Vali or of the Central Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 134.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 102.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 11, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus reporting a conversation with Abdullah Pasha, who had just returned from the Hauran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 134.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Damascus, January* 27, 1897.

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Eyres' despatch No. 42 of the 7th October, 1896, reporting the arrival here from Beyrout of Field-Marshal Abdullah Pasha and his projected departure for the scene of military operations in the Hauran, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that that officer has quite recently returned to Damascus.

In the course of an interview which I had with Abdullah Pasha on the recent occasion of the Sultan's birthday, he informed me that all was quiet at present in the Hauran, which appears to be the case in the sense that there at present no overt acts of rebellion; but whether the Druses *se rendent pour mieux sauter* or not is another matter as to which it would be difficult at present to give a decisive opinion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 135.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 105.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 11, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 998 of the 2nd December respecting the abuses in the collection of taxes in the Vilayet of Maamuret-ul-Aziz, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput reporting that in many villages in the vilayet which were pillaged during the disturbances in 1895 arrears of taxes for past years were still being collected in addition to the taxes for the current year.

I propose to communicate the substance of Mr. Fontana's despatch to the Grand Vizier, and to request his Highness to issue categorical instructions to the Vali forbidding the collection of taxes from any plundered village.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 135.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Kharput, January* 23, 1897.

IN confirmation of my telegram of to-day's date I have the honour to report to your Excellency that in many villages which suffered heavily during the disturbances of 1895 an attempt has been made to collect arrears of taxes due for several past years, in addition to the ordinary tax for the present Turkish year.

The following details with regard to the condition of certain of the villages in question, the tax already paid by the Armenian inhabitants and the amount of arrears demanded from them, may offer some idea of the havoc wrought by the disturbances, and the straits to which the peasantry have been reduced in their attempt to meet the demands of the tax-collectors during the past few months:—

Tadem.—200 out of a total of 260 houses were burnt, those spared belonging chiefly to Turks. All the Armenian houses were plundered, 40,000 piastres—i.e., the ordinary yearly tax—have been demanded for the current Ottoman year, of which 32,000 piastres have already been paid; 2,000 more are ready for payment, and certain of the villagers have informed me that if time is given them they hope to eventually pay the balance of 6,000 piastres. A tahsildar, however, recently proceeded to Tadem and demanded 30,000 piastres owing for last year; drove certain of the leading Armenians (including the Koja Bashi) and shut them up in a house, saying that they would be detained there until the arrears in question were forthcoming. The man is now under arrest.

Ichmeh.—150 Armenian houses, which were all looted from ceiling to basement, and ten of which were burnt. 18,000 piastres have been collected there, and 5,500 still remain owing for this year's tax. 12,000 piastres have further been demanded for last year's arrears.

Erzurek.—Fifteen Christian houses and fifteen Turkish. The Armenian houses were stripped by the Kurds, who drove off a few head of cattle belonging to Turks. 5,000 piastres are to be collected from the Armenians there for this year, out of which sum only 1,200 piastres now remain unpaid. An additional claim, nevertheless, has been brought by the tahsildars for 10,000 piastres alleged to be owing for the last nine years.

Chetteli Ul Ova.—This village consisted in fifteen Armenian houses, which were destroyed by the Kurds. The villagers were compelled to migrate to two other villages. Bedel-i-askeri to the amount of 1,800 piastres has been demanded from the refugees, of which they have only been able, hitherto, to pay 500 piastres.

Bismishan.—Hearing that there was great need in this village, and that the people had been ill-treated by the tax-collectors, I went there the other day under the guidance of a Capuchin Friar, and visited upwards of thirty of the poorest Armenian families. Bismishan comprised, before the troubles, 260 houses, of which nearly 260 were destroyed by the Kurds, who toiled for a fortnight at the work of destruction. The village is only two hours distant from Mezreh; it is now a shapeless pile of ruins among which the inhabitants burrow under brushwood roofing constructed over such walls as have not wholly subsided. Even this primitive attempt to rebuild a shelter exhausted, in a great measure, the meagre resources derived by the villagers from their harvest last autumn.

During the course of my visits I carefully inspected the dwellings and the large earthen jars therein containing the store of wheat, "bulgour" or meal, representing the food supply of the various families. In some huts I found only a little wheat and some wild vegetables; in others, wheat and meal sufficient for one month's food; and, in more prosperous hovels, wheat and "bulgour" calculated to suffice for two months. In many instances there was an absolute want of bedding, and in nearly every case the earthen jars referred to formed the only household utensils. The people are clothed in rags without the possibility, in their present condition, of a change of linen. A hut inhabited by a widow with her two children—aged from 4 to 6 years—presented a most pitiable spectacle of sheer distress. The only food supply consisted of a little meal, sufficing to support the woman and her children for two or three weeks. There was no bedding whatever, and a piece of ragged matting constituted the whole furniture. The children were half-naked and were cowering, when I saw them, over the embers of a peat fire.

Forty beds, together with material for clothing, have to-day been sent to Bismishan for distribution among the most destitute villagers, and a distribution of wheat will be necessary there within less than two month's time, as far as I could judge. This village, however, I learn upon good authority, is less needy, upon the whole, than many others.

Over 23,000 piastres have been collected from Bismishan since the harvest of 1896. 20,700 piastres are further demanded, I am told, for arrears. Seven Armenians there, including a woman, have been beaten at various times by the collectors, one of whom was a Mussulman and the other a Christian zaptieh named Yacob, an ex-shoemaker of Mezreh.

Yesterday, in the course of a long conversation with the Vali, I laid the above

facts before him, and told him that although I could not vouch, in some cases, for the absolute accuracy of the figures thereto appended, I had every reason to believe that they were in no way exaggerated; and I reminded him that the exaction of arrears of taxes from the poverty-stricken villages was contrary to the tenor of the instructions sent by the Grand Vizier, and communicated by his Highness to Her Majesty's Embassy.

Raouf Bey seemed agitated, took notes of the statements made to him by me, and promised to make an immediate inquiry into their authenticity. Orders have now been issued that no arrears of taxes shall be levied from Tadem or Bismishan, and I am hopeful that similar orders may be given as regards the other villages alluded to in this despatch. The payment of the entire tax claimed for this year in the case of most of the Armenian villages in the Kharput plain, will, if insisted upon, further impoverish the people, and expose them to still greater distress; but I would submit that the attempt to extort arrears from the indigent villagers is like to prove as futile as it is monstrous.

Categorical instructions from the Grand Vizier to the Vali, imperatively prohibiting the levy of arrears of taxes from any plundered village might do much to lighten the burden and revive the hopes of the suffering Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 136.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 106.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 16, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 58 of the 26th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular officers at Aleppo and Bitlis respecting the number of Armenians released in their respective vilayets under the general amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 136.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Aleppo, January 30, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 4 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a list containing the names and other particulars regarding the 141 Armenian political prisoners who have been released within the Vilayet of Aleppo under the general amnesty of December 1896.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 136.

NAMES and Domicile of all Armenian Political Prisoners released within the Vilayet of Aleppo, under General Amnesty of December 1896.

No.	Name.	District.
	Kevork Keloolian	From the Suedia village of Hadji Habibia.
	Mardik Kurkyan	
	Moses Kurkyan	
	Daniel Mootikian	
	Arakel Aghassian	
	Bedros Habeshian	
	Bedros Ghazarian	
	Bedros Borsalian	
	Serkis Hakesian	
10	Adam Chaparian	
	Murderos Dishlian	
	Moses Vanessian	
	Murderos Chanchanyan	
	Imina Der Bedrossyan	
	Moses Borsalian	
	Serkis Mikhailian	From the Suedia village of Joghoor Olookhi.
	Mikhail Mikhailian	
	Agob Yeralian	
	Leon Mikhailian	
20	Arab Birmaian	
	Soghomon Adadjian	
	Abram Abramian	
	Manork Vanessian	
	Suedjali Nerses	
	Suedjali Kapriel	
	Serkis Tasakian	
	Abram Boghokjian	
	Kevork Sahagian	
	Kevork Kevorkian	
30	Samuel Keshishian	
	Agob Kolakian	
	Osep Kolakian	
	Serkis Garabetian	
	Abram Akhirian	
	Ohannes Akhirian	
	Ohan Antonian	
	Saghjek Ghazarian	
	Agob Tnoukjian	
	Ohannes Keshishian	From the Suedia village of Keboosé.
40	Ohannes Kechian	
	Vanies Kechian	
	Abou Boghossian	
	Moses Kerem	
	Moses Hinbedian	
	Hohannes Hairabedian	
	Issa Ser Simeon	
	Serkis Boosjian	
	Assai Kirikjian	
	Alexan Derderian	
50	Gumoukiu Ronpen	
	Seghomon Osepian	From the Suedia village of Kessab. The prisoners from these villages of Suedia were accused of harbouring Hunchag agents. Their connection with the attempted revolt is shown in Mr. Barnham's No. 30, Confidential, of the 1st June, 1895. Many of them were in the first instance confined in the district prison of Jisr Shogr, where they suffered greatly from over-crowding and bad sanitary arrangements. They were all in great want at the time of their release, and were supplied with money and clothing from the relief fund at the disposal of the Consulate.
	Minass Osepian	
	Tanenos Atikian	
	Missak Missirlian	
	Osep Chorekian	
	Minass Osepian	
	Adoor Tomikian	
	Pantoskara Sahagian	
	Peniamin Ashkarian	
60	Manass Soghomonian	
	Samuel Osepian	
	Nischan Chirikian	
	Zeinab Soghomonian	
	Der Nicola (Catholic priest)	
	Agob Soghomonian	
	Assayi Atikian	
	Hampartsoum Atikian	

No.	Name.		District.
	Girop Ozepian	.. ..	From the Suedia village of Kessab. The prisoners from these villages of Suedia were accused of harbouring Hunchag agents. Their connection with the attempted revolt is shown in Mr. Barnham's No. 30, Confidential, of the 1st June, 1896. Many of them were in the first instance confined in the district prison of Jisr Shogr, where they suffered greatly from over-crowding and bad sanitary arrangements. They were all in great want at the time of their release, and were supplied with money and clothing from the relief fund at the disposal of the Consulate.
	Ni-chan Ozepian	.. ..	
70	Samuel Yilourian	.. ..	
	Ozep Chilnikirian	.. ..	
	Hachar Ashkarian	.. ..	
	Muggerditch Antossian	..	
	Shamo Guzlian	.. ..	
	Agob Kenderdjian	.. ..	
	Elias Kenderdjian	.. ..	
	Osep Muggerditchian	.. ..	
	Abram Muggerditchian	..	
	Nischan Osepian	.. ..	
80	Missak Missirlian	.. ..	
	Ohan Ohannessian	.. ..	From Alexandretta. Boghos Shamlian, formerly American Dragoman at Alexandretta (see No. 28 of the 30th May, 1895).
	Norses Vartabed Danielian	..	
	Boghos Shamlian	..	
	Thitoint Shamlian	.. ..	
	Girnup Keshishian	.. ..	
	Aghin Bedrian	.. ..	
	Demiriji Garabet	.. ..	From Aintab.
	Soghomon Krikorian	.. ..	
	Serkis Barsakhian	.. ..	
90	Bedros Boyadjian	.. ..	From Beilan.
	Avidis Kiumussian	.. ..	
	Hairabed Arvajian	.. ..	
	Gebriil Metchizei	.. ..	
	Busturan Panos	.. ..	From Zeitoun. These men came to the Consulate after their release with a request to be supplied with money to buy fire-arms.
	Panos Ohanian	.. ..	
	Serkis Ouanian	.. ..	
	Unidid Catoust	.. ..	
	Garabed Bighdjian	.. ..	Of Kharpat.
	Leander Bighjian	.. ..	
100	Nigoghos ..	.. ..	Of Hadjin.
	Mikhail ..	.. ..	Of Mush.
	Agob Ohannessian (Protestant preacher)		Of Tchookmerzvent, Vilayet of Adana.
	Agob Assadoorian	.. ..	Of Aleppo.
	Garabed Ashjian	.. ..	
	Artin Ashjian	.. ..	
	Leon Ashjian	.. ..	
	Garabed Vanikian	.. ..	
	Yervant Hedelian	.. ..	

Agob Assadoorian, a lawyer practising at Aleppo, formerly Censor of foreign newspapers, and a spy in the pay of the late Hassan Hakki Pasha, Vali of Aleppo.

He was a Hunchagist, was arrested after the departure of Hussan Pasha, and imprisoned at Marash, where he wrote a confession, in which he described the proceedings of Aghassé and other Hunchag leaders, and falsely denounced several leading Armenians in Aleppo and Aintab of having contributed funds for the insurrection at Zeitoun.

These persons were on the point of being arrested when the general amnesty was proclaimed.

A copy of this man's confession is in the possession of the Consulate, and will be useful for reference should these charges ever be brought forward again.

Assadoorian, together with the brothers Ashjian (also notorious agitators), have been expelled from the country.

	Sirag Vatrian	.. ..	Of Yurpouz (Albistan).
110	Boghos Chirligian	.. ..	Hunchag agents from abroad, of whom the first nine carried Armenian passports, and the last-named a Russian passport. They were brought to Aleppo under arrest on the 8th May last, together with the villagers from Suedia. On release day were expelled from Turkey.
	Nigoghos Vanian	.. ..	
	Setoukerim Boujaklian	.. ..	
	Ephraim Gajarian	.. ..	
	Serag Arukotian	.. ..	
	Serkis Batmian	.. ..	
	Serkis Der Hohannessian	..	
	Hagob Jundjedjian	.. ..	
	Mardiros Simonian	.. ..	
	Geroni Sarakian	.. ..	

Prisoners released at Marash.

120	Der Ghevont (priest)	.. ..	Of Marash (see note below).
121	Der Serkis (priest)	..	Of Shirligi.
	Der Bartoghomos (priest)	..	Of Furnouz (see note below).
	Garabed Chorbadjian	.. ..	Of Marash.
	Kevork Zeitounlian	.. ..	
	Avidis Tokatlian	.. ..	

No.	Name.		District.
	Garudj Bilemdjian	.. ..	Of Aintab.
	Kevork Andreas Oghlou	..	Of Zeitoun (see note below).
	Miran Dadjian	.. ..	Of Hadjin.
	Mardiros Godiroghlou	.. ..	Of Kiveeh.
130	Gostan ..	.. ..	Of Zeitoun.
	Harountun Saldjian	.. ..	
	Simon ..	.. ..	
	Khacher ..	.. ..	

N.B.—(*a.*) The priest Der Ghevont was a violent Hunchagist, denounced by Agob Assadoorian in his confession above referred to. There is abundant proof that this man was subjected to barbarous tortures while in Marash prison.

(*b.*) Der Bartholomas is a man of weak intellect, who took an active part in the fighting outside Zeitoun, at Andrin, Yenidjé Kalé, and Geben. His re-arrest was a violation of the amnesty granted to all those who took part in the insurrection.

(*c.*) Kevork Andreas Oghlou was denounced by the officer commanding Major Massy's escort of using seditious language (see Sir Philip Currie's despatch of the 16th November, 1896).

Prisoners released at Alexandretta.

	Osep Guleserian	.. ..	Of Marash.
	Apeth Balian	.. ..	Of Beilan.
	Avidis Debedjian	.. ..	"

Prisoners released at Urfa.

	Toros Kenderdjian	.. ..	Of Urfa.
	Avidis Genedjoghlouyan	..	
	Muggerditch Muksi Khudirian	..	
	Yussuf (or Cricor)	.. ..	Of Diarbekir.
141	Levon Soghomonian (Protestant preacher)		Of Birejik.—A man of high character, who was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment because a translation in Turkish of one of Lord Salisbury's speeches was found in his possession.

Inclosure 3 in No. 136.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.)

Sir, *Bitlis, January 30, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 4 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to report that there now remain in Bitlis prison no prisoners, tried or untried, on charges of a political character, seventeen Armenians in all having been released here.

There may still be three or four Armenians in Mush who should be released under the amnesty, and I have just heard of an alleged Armenian political prisoner in Hizam who apparently should be released; but I am still without exact information as to these alleged cases of the failure of the authorities to carry out the Amnesty Decree.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 137.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 107.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, February 16, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the arrest of

certain alleged members of the Young Turkey party and the consequent excitement in the town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 137.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Erzeroum, February 5, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that Emin Effendi, a doctor, and Redjeb Effendi, a veterinary surgeon, two young Turks recently exiled to Erzeroum from Constantinople as members of the Young Turkey party, have just been arrested and imprisoned, together with five or six young military officers, on charges of using subversive and seditious language.

As these are the first political arrests of Turks which have taken place at Erzeroum for a long time past, they have naturally caused some excitement, and have given rise to various rumours as to the activity of the Young Turkey party in Constantinople, and the existence of a wide-spread spirit of disaffection throughout the army, for the latter of which, at least, there appears to be, locally speaking, a certain amount of justification.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 138.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 108.)
Pera, February 16, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith, translations of two revolutionary Proclamations lately circulated among the Moslem population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 138.

Substance of Revolutionary Proclamation.

COMPLAINS of the Sultan and his tyranny. He has sold the country to Russia. Killed Midhat Pasha; tortured and drowned thousands of students and other innocents. Others have been exiled. All Government posts are held by vile creatures ready to act as his tools. The officials everywhere are palace protégés, and suck the people's blood. The troops, once so brave, cannot now stand up against a few miserable Macedonian or Cretan or Hauran brigands. The fleet is rotting in the dockyards. The cause of all this is Abdul-Hamid, unjustly called the Khalif. He prefers to hand the country over to the enemy rather than accord us freedom. He has established spies among us, and sown dissensions everywhere by his diabolical machinations. He has stained our glorious history through the Armenian massacres; he will next devote his attention to the Turks.

Every Ottoman should join the Revolutionary Society, and put an end to Abdul-Hamid and his band, and special appeals are made to the army, the officers, students, and Ministers.

Inclosure 2 in No. 138.

Placard affixed to Walls.

(Translation.)

OTTOMANS!

While the time passes in lamentation, in bowing the neck to, and giving advice to, the tyrant who causes it, we see the terrible results. We all know that the distraught Abdul-Hamid's lunacy has during the last few days reached such a pitch that he attacks all whom he encounters.

Ottomans!

We know that it is a duty to kill a mad dog; hence the Turkish Revolutionary Party, which has till now abstained from bloodshed, has now fully determined, arms in hand, to put the tyrants in their proper place, and obtain vengeance for the oppressed. On the very first opportunity we shall take the field, and we trust that all you who carry in your bosoms an Ottoman heart, will not be dismayed by our title of revolutionary, but will join our sacred ranks, and acquit yourselves of your debt to justice and country. We declare at once that should any abuse us, and refuse to carry out any reasonable duty which we assign to him, especially should the police or soldiery, we will not speak of spies, great and small, seek to block our path, death alone shall judge between us. Yes, we shall die, kill, slaughter, burn, destroy; we fear no one. Our hearts are long since made up: laws and fetvas indicate our path most clearly. There is no other course open to us. Our strength is enough not only to destroy two or three hypocrites, we have dynamite sufficient to extinguish the Yildiz of our Swinish Padishah, and to blow its ashes to the stars of heaven. It will be used wherever the safety of the nation requires it.

Oh! countrymen! who have long sought for relief from tyranny, but shrink from bloodshed, come, throng the Porte, and every other Government Office in the town; if necessary, take your cudgels, your knives, fear nothing. For the lives of all who would molest you are in our hands. Rise! show a spark of Turkish feeling, you who have not yet raised your heads. Do not justify the reproach that you are degenerate. Take the sacrifices made by the Armenians as an example; stretch out your hands to them so as to cover the errors recently made. If you cannot brook to follow them, show them the way. What a bitter life is this which leaves us unable to march side by side with our own countrymen.

Tremble Turks! at least before God, that he may put into your hearts some plan to free you from the burden of this tyranny. Do you hear the groans of mothers, fathers, brothers, children, crying for vengeance? Rise, Ottomans, whether bowed with age, or robust in youth. Do not stand idly by while the children of the country, for some unpaid tax, or on a political accusation, true or false, are carried off in spite of their lamentations; rush to their assistance. Cut in pieces the tormentors, and with your united force drive the enemy away. Let it be possible for joy to visit those Ottomans who groan in prison, in torture, or famishing in the fairest spots of Anatolia or Roumelia. Our watchword is justice or death; we will have our Parliament opened, and root up and destroy this tyrannical Government. We intend to begin the work asking for God's blessing. We proclaim it; our responsibility is henceforth at an end.

(L.S.) Ottoman Revolutionary Society.

"Justice or Death."

No. 139.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 110.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, February 16, 1897.

IN the month of June last year Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput reported that the Turkish Government official attached to the Armenian Relief Committee at Chemish Ghezek had retained 80 liras out of the relief funds for the payment of taxes.

Mr. Herbert immediately requested that orders should be given for the repayment

of the money to the Committee, and I have repeatedly caused representations to be made to the Sublime Porte in the same sense.

I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Fontana reporting that the Kaïmakam of Chemish Ghezek has been dismissed, and that his successor states that he has refunded to the villagers a considerable proportion of the money seized.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 139.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir, *Kharput, February 2, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 25th ultimo, informing me that the Vali had been ordered to refund the sum deducted from relief money by the Acting Kaïmakam of Chemish Ghezek, I now have the honour to report that Tahsin Bey has been dismissed, and a Colonel, named Shevky Bey, appointed in his place.

In a telegram to the Vali, which has been shown to me, the new Acting Kaïmakam states that he has already refunded to the villagers nearly 1,700 piastres out of the 3,000 piastres due to them, and adds that the balance will be gradually paid off. I have not yet been able, however, to ascertain whether the statement in question is accurate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 140.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 111.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Consul-General Mockler respecting the oppression of Nestorian Christians at Bawarah. I am calling the attention of the Sublime Porte to the conduct of the Mudir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 3.)
(Translation.) *Mosul, January 14, 1897.*

WITH reference to my letter No. 34 dated the 24th September, 1895, I have the honour to report that Mutran Yeshooyah and Kas Youhanna were last summer summoned to Amadieh by Mustafa Selim Effendi, the Kaïmakam of that place, ostensibly with the object of adjusting the difference between them and Reshid Beg, the Mudir of Bawarah, but in reality with the hope of obtaining from them a declaratory statement in contradiction to their complaints against Reshid Beg.

When these complainants came to Amadieh they made statements before the said Kaïmakam and the members of the Administrative Council of that place confirming their former complaints. The Kaïmakam having partiality towards Reshid Beg, as he always receives presents from the latter, did not send those statements to Mosul, and Reshid Beg having got the more irritated by the way the Mutran and the Kas Youhanna behaved in the matter, on his return to the district sent his men, who beat them severely and threw them into a pond full of water, and fined each of them 10 liras; they also treated another priest and one named Patti, the Headman of the village called Doori, in the very same manner, and fined them 10 liras. Owing to this cruel treatment and other injuries the said Mutran and the priest were obliged to come down to Mosul and complained against Reshid Beg to the new Vali. They

submitted to his Excellency two Mazbatas sealed by most of the trustworthy inhabitants of Bawarah, one from the Mahommedans and the other from the Christians, in which they enumerated the injuries they suffered at the hand of Reshid Beg, and solicited his removal from the Mudirat and commission to trial.

I am told that the said Mazbatas are confirmed by Ismael Agha, a member of the Administrative Council of Amadieh, Sa'ad Allah Agha, the Head of the Municipality, Omer Effendi, Mudir of the Public Debts Department, and Abdul Aziz Agha, one of the persons of note at Amadieh; but the Vali (owing to persuasion on the part of certain persons of distinction here, who take the part of Reshid Beg and defend him and get presents for his non-appearance here), instead of ordering his presence here, sent the said Mazbatas to the Kaïmakam of Amadieh, who no doubt will acquit Reshid Beg from all the oppression he is accused of. His principal protector and supporter is Sheikh Baha-ud-Din, Nakshbundi, who resides in the village Bamarni, within the district of Amadieh, and who never ceases inciting Reshid Beg to ill-treat the Christians of the district and offer them injuries. Should the Vali only dismiss Reshid Beg from his post as Mudir, and appoint another person, the poor inhabitants will be relieved from his tyranny and find repose. The said Reshid Beg, in spite of being a Mudir, is now like a prisoner in his castle, with about fifty men to protect him; he is unable to go out, for there is a considerable number of Kurds and Christians of Bawarah assembled there, all under arms, with a party of Christians of Tyari, who have quartered themselves in the village Bidoo near Reshid Beg's castle, watching for the moment of his attempt to go out in order to kill him, for in autum last he murdered Abu Bekir, the Head of the village Bidoo, and ordered his brother to kill Tahir Beg, the brother of Ismael Beg, which he did; and he, Reshid Beg, had two years ago also killed two other persons from the Moslem inhabitants of the same village. Consequently, the aforesaid Ismael Beg, with Ali Beg and Thilly Beg, together with some others, called together the brave men of twelve Mahommedan villages and twenty-one Christian villages in the Bawarah district, besides the party from Tyari, and they all came to the village Bidoo with the intention of taking vengeance from Reshid Beg.

As to my humble self, I am quite surprised that the Government allow their poor subjects to become the prey of this ravishing wolf, while hundreds of Valis, Mutessarifs, Kaïmakams, and Mudirs are dismissed and transferred from one place to another, and this Mudir has become greater than a Prime Minister, who in spite of all the injuries and oppressions caused by him is still firm in his post of a Mudir, and is never shaken from his place.

(Signed) NIMROD RASSAM.

No. 141.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 112.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, transmitting the Mosul news report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 141.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 54.)
Sir, *Bagdad, January 23, 1897.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 104 dated the 4th December, 1896, I have the honour, very respectfully, to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a news letter dated the 14th instant, from Mr. Nimrod Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 141.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 4.)
(Translation.) *Mosul, January* 14, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that his Excellency Zehdi Pasha the Vali, owing to strict orders received by him from Constantinople to make search for the person who had posted the paper in the market of this town, and of which I informed you in my letter dated the 24th November, 1896, sent, some days ago, for the son of Aziz Effendi Abdel Noor, one of the respectable members of the Syrian Jacobite community, and put him in prison upon the charge of having committed the said act. He was so treated because he gave evidence against a Mahommedan whom he had seen posting the paper in the market. The imprisonment of this person in such a manner being unjust, the Christians here were afflicted thereby, for they saw it was the intention of the Vali to acquit the Mahommedans and to accuse the said young man. Aziz Effendi, after imprisonment of his son, went to the Vali and explained the real state of the matter, and tried much to induce him to release his son, but failed. At last he applied to the French Consul, who sent his Dragoman to the Vali and demanded the young man's release, but according to what I hear his Excellency has promised to release him, but has not done so until now.

While the Vali was unmindful of the affairs of the reform as a matter of no moment, he received a strict order from Constantinople for immediate attention to its execution through consultation with the French Consul, and, yesterday, he called together the members of the Commission which was formed when Refik Pasha was acting, but I have not come to know as to what sort of discussion has taken place between them.

The day before yesterday there came a telegram from Constantinople ordering a reduction of 10 per cent. from the pay of civil and military officers, which exceed 500 G.S. piastres, and it is to take effect from the 1st Kanun Sani, 1312 (13th January, 1897).

(Signed) NIMROD RASSAM.

No. 142.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 114.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 18, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a communication which I have received from Mr. Dwight, of the Constantinople Evangelical Alliance, urging the necessity of securing to the Protestant community proper representation in the Administrative Councils of the Empire.

I have informed Mr. Dwight that I did not think the moment opportune for raising the question, but that when it is decided what reforms are to be pressed upon the Turkish Government, I would endeavour to secure a proper representation of Protestant interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 142.

The Rev. H. O. Dwight to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Constantinople, February* 15, 1897.

WITH your Excellency's permission I would like to present the views of the local branch of the Evangelical Alliance upon the desirableness of securing for the Protestant community in Turkey better representation in the departments of Government where this is practicable.

The Protestant community in Turkey embraces about 100,000 souls. Its members stand at a high level for probity and intelligence. In this community the percentage of illiterate persons, as well as that of misdemeanants and criminals, is so small as to

be a matter of pride to all of its members. At the same time, Protestants are rarely appointed to those departments of the general Government service in which Christians are employed. In the Administrative Councils of the provinces while in some cases Protestants are given seats, in some cases they are excluded from these, even where communities locally smaller than the Protestant community are allowed to have a member in the Council. At Constantinople we do not know of a single Protestant member of any mixed Council in any department of the Government. This condition of affairs is emphasized in the recent appointments to the Administrative section of the Council of State, of representatives of the Roman Catholic, Greek, Gregorian, Armenian, Bulgarian, and Hebrew communities, there being no Protestant in any section of this Council.

It is surely an injustice that Protestants should be entirely unrepresented in the departments of Government at the capital, and particularly in the Council of State. Questions of infinite importance to the Protestant community come up for decision in this body, and may easily be decided in a sense unjust to the Protestants; not necessarily through design, but through carelessness or ignorance of the interests which are injured by the decision.

If a Protestant member were appointed to the Administrative section of the Council of State, with the right also to be heard in any section of the Council when matters affecting Protestant interests are discussed, the simple explanation of those interests might often secure the Protestants of the Empire from legislation which is injurious or unjust to them.

To the interests of the Roman Catholics of the Empire, including their appointment to Government offices, the French Embassy pays some attention.

The Greeks have also powerful patrons among the European Embassies. The Protestants do not expect such political support from any foreign Embassy; but we would like to suggest to your Excellency the infelicities of the present situation in this regard, and to beg consideration of the question whether it may not be proper, as well as practicable, for the British Embassy, in case details should come under discussion, of any new arrangements of an administrative character in Turkey, to exercise influence in the direction of securing to the Protestant community representation in important mixed Councils at the capital like the Council of State and the Council of Public Instruction, as well as in the Administrative Councils in the provinces wherever the size of the communities permits.

In behalf of the Constantinople branch of the Evangelical Alliance, I have, &c.
(Signed) H. O. DWIGHT,
Honorary Secretary.

No. 143.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 115.)
My Lord, *Pera, February* 18, 1897.

YESTERDAY being the 15th day of Ramazan, the Sultan proceeded to Stamboul in order to inspect and kiss the fragment of the mantle of the Prophet known as the Hirka-i-Sherif, which is preserved in the Palace of Top Kapou or Old Seraglio.

This annual ceremony always attracts considerable attention as it is practically the only occasion in the year when His Imperial Majesty leaves his Palace, the mosque at which the weekly Selamik takes place being only a few yards from the grounds of Yildiz.

This year, however, the day was awaited with more than ordinary interest, as it had been persistently rumoured that the revolutionary party would make an attempt on His Majesty's life as he drove through the streets; it was also concurrently believed that serious disturbances, and even a general massacre, would take place, but some persons think that these stories were spread by the Palace in order to alarm the inhabitants of the town, and deter them from stirring out of doors. Extraordinary precautions were taken by the police, and unusually large bodies of troops were posted along the various possible routes from Yildiz to Stamboul, and in the various quarters of the city. The precise road which the Sultan will take is always kept secret till the last moment. Yesterday His Majesty left the palace before 12 o'clock in a closed carriage followed by many others containing the chief dignitaries of the Empire, and several of the Sultanas, but on arriving at the bottom of the hill which leads from Yildiz to the shore of the Bosphorus, he embarked

in a steam-launch and proceeded by water to Top-Kapou, whence he returned in the same manner. The rest of the Imperial cortège drove to its destination so rapidly that it was hardly possible to see that the Sultan was not in his carriage, and the bands of school children placed on the road to welcome their Sovereign, saluted the empty vehicle with loyal strains.

Last year the Sultan returned by water for the first time, and also did not remain in Stamboul for his evening meal, as was the old custom. The fact that the visit was this year similary abbreviated, and that His Majesty made both journeys by water, and without any pomp, have given rise to much comment.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the day passed off entirely without incident, and that there was no demonstration of any kind on the part of the Young Turkey party.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 144.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 22.)

(No. 50. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, February 17, 1897.*

IN the course of a visit he paid me yesterday, Count Kapnist came to speak of the draft scheme of reforms, which has now been referred by the Ambassadors at Constantinople to their several Governments. He had, of course, not yet seen the draft himself, but his Secretary of Embassy, M. Boulatzell, had gathered from Sir Edgar Vincent, who passed through here two days ago on his way home, that it was believed to contain sound practical suggestions, and was not, as had been foretold, an ambitious attempt at framing entirely new institutions for the Turkish Empire.

Starting from this, the Russian Ambassador expressed, as he has done to me before, his conviction that the success of the effort about to be made to obtain an improvement in the Turkish régime, based of course on the maintenance of the *status quo*, would entirely depend on the character and scope of the reforms to be imposed on the Sultan. Certain reforms were entirely beyond His Majesty's performance, even if his consent to them could be obtained. My colleague went, on this point, into somewhat lengthy considerations, the gist of which was that serious financial reform would be certain to be frustrated by ingrained native corruption, while an efficient foreign financial control would almost necessarily lead to a condominium with all its risks; that the introduction of thorough administrative reform in the more distant provinces was equally hopeless for lack of honest or capable officials; that, in short, any attempt at a radical change of system in Turkey must end in disappointment or worse.

If, on the contrary, the pressure to be brought to bear on the Sultan were confined to exacting from him a tolerable state of things at the seat of Government, an absolute guarantee that, by the expulsion of evil counsellors, by efficient measures of police, by injunctions to the troops which surrounded him, a return to the policy of terrorism and massacre should be rendered impossible, then much would be gained, and the attempt to obtain this was well worth the making. Of course it would be indispensable to hold the Sultan directly and personally responsible for the execution of this limited programme, but the means at the disposal of the Powers ought to render this a relatively easy task. As regards Macedonia, too, its geographical position might perhaps render it possible to obtain some improvement in its condition, but my colleague was unable to admit that much could be done for the Asiatic provinces, beyond interfering, from time to time, to procure the removal of some specially obnoxious Vali, or other functionary. Indeed he did not believe in the feasibility of introducing anything like a well-ordered system on the Western pattern in those regions without an amount of interference from one or other of the Powers, which could not but seriously endanger the general peace. To sum up the impression conveyed to me by Count Kapnist's remarks, he would seek so to improve the position at head-quarters as to make the continuance of the *status quo* there endurable to the more easy-going of human consciences; he would, with the same view, try, when it was absolutely necessary, to repress the more scandalous excesses committed from time to time at a distance from the centre, but, for the rest, would let the Empire drift on to its ruin, with all the wretchedness inseparable from a process of slow decay. There is, of course, nothing new in such a policy stated from a Russian point of view, and, in defence of it, my colleague could only urge the dire alternative of a European conflict which must, according to him, inevitably result from any indiscreet attempt to impose excessive reforms at Constantinople.

Being on terms of some intimacy with Count Kapnist I asked him to tell me frankly what would be his solution of this terrible Eastern question, the essential difficulty of which was, of course, the ultimate disposal of Constantinople, and of the Straits. He replied at once, and with much apparent sincerity, that, speaking for himself, he would on no account depart from the *status quo* on those points. Russia had no real interest in acquiring Constantinople, and she had every interest in maintaining the existing state of things, as assured to her by Treaty, which left in her hands the keys to the Black Sea, "la clef de la maison," as Count Kapnist put it. A very long stretch of Russian frontier was thereby covered, and, as against this immense advantage, it was absurd to talk of a Russian necessity for expansion towards the Mediterranean. The trade of Russia in that direction was too unimportant to need such an outlet, and as for her navy, why should she care to parade her ships ("faire promener ses vaisseaux") in that sea? The Suez Canal was of interest to Russia, he admitted, but that could just as well be reached from the Baltic. His personal policy, therefore, was simply to uphold the existing Treaties at any cost.

It has seemed to me worth while to report to your Lordship these views of the Russian Ambassador, because they in some degree reflect those expressed by M. de Witte to Sir Nicholas O'Conor on a recent occasion, and also because Count Kapnist is believed to have been a possible candidate for the Russian Foreign Office, and was, I have some reason to think, the diplomatist whose appointment would have been most welcome to the French Government. At the French Embassy here certainly it was hoped to the last that the choice of the Emperor might fall upon him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 145.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)

(No. 75. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, February 28, 1897, 11:30 A.M.*

MUNIR BEY, Ottoman Ambassador in Paris, stated that the Sultan would be glad to receive the reforms at once, and would refer them to a Council that would decide on those to be accepted and those to be rejected. M. Hanotaux has asked M. Cambon his opinion on this communication.

The Ambassadors are unanimous in considering that, during the present crisis, it would be useless to propose reforms.

No. 146.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 117.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 22, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo respecting the military changes, and their connection with the general condition of the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 146.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 1. Confidential.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February 8, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 5th, and my reply of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report that the battalion of regular troops which had

been stationed at Birejik since the month of August has been withdrawn and replaced by Reserves.

Knowing that your Excellency had attached importance to the employment of regular troops at Birejik, I spoke to the Mushir on the subject, who has informed me that the town is at present perfectly tranquil, but that, on the slightest indication of disorder, he will be ready to replace those Reserves by regular troops.

In connection with this particular change, I have to report that considerable modifications are taking place in the military establishment. The total number of Reserve battalions for the two vilayets, together with the Sandjak of Zor, which form the collective command of Edhem Pasha, will be reduced from thirty-four to ten, which, with the eight battalions of regular troops now in the district, gives a total force of eighteen battalions.

Those Reserves which remained under arms during last year, and had not previously been disbanded, will now return to their homes, and of the ten fresh battalions, five have already landed at Alexandretta, and the remainder are expected in a few days.

The regular battalions are stationed as follows:—

Two at Zeitoun, two at Marash, one at Ourfa, one at Aintab, one in the Adana Vilayet, and one, now withdrawn from Birejik, and reserved for employment in collecting taxes from the nomad Arabs.

Of the Reserve battalions, two will be stationed at Aleppo, one at Suedia, one at Osmanié, one at Alexandretta, one at Pyas, two at Adana, one at Ourfa, and one at Aintab.

The larger portion of these Reserves is drawn from Palestine. Their employment is, perhaps, to be preferred, because they are strangers, and having no family ties, are less likely to make common cause with Moslems against Christians, but they have an intense dislike to service here, and desertions have been numerous.

A few weeks ago 170 men belonging to a battalion at Ourfa deserted with their arms, and attempted to reach the coast at Tripoli, but were arrested at Hama and sent back to Ourfa.

There is apparent tranquillity throughout the vilayet.

At Zeitoun the military position has, since I was there, been strengthened by the completion of the new barracks, capable of holding 2,000 men, whereas the old barracks could barely accommodate one battalion. The new barracks have also an abundant supply of water, drawn from a well sunk on the premises, at the east side, which is difficult of attack.

This, and the construction of the military road, has placed Zeitoun finally in the hands of the Turks, but I have received no complaints from the town, and conclude that the condition of the people is better than might have been expected.

With regard to Aintab and Marash, the missionaries recently wrote to say that they had for months passed enjoyed a sense of security unknown since the commencement of the disturbances, and they attributed it to the residence of the Mushir among them. Edhem Pasha has, however, returned to Aleppo, and the situation at Aintab, which formerly gave us so much anxiety, continues to be satisfactory.

Ismail Bey, formerly Kaimakam of Hadjin, has recently been appointed to Aintab. Before proceeding to his post he came to see me by desire of the Mushir, who told me that he had given him sound advice as to his attitude towards Nouri Bey and other notorious Moslems of Aintab, and that he hoped for good results.

Both the Catholic priests and American missionaries wrote from Ourfa at the beginning of the year describing incidents which, though trifling in themselves, show that the Moslem population requires to be watched. They betray an ever-present sense of triumph in their language towards Christians, who dare not resent it.

Mr. Catoni has informed me of the existence of some disorder at Tchokmerzeinen, in the Caza of Pyas, but this is a matter which, I understand, is being investigated by Major Mussy, by your Excellency's instructions.

There is no probability of a renewal of disturbances in this vilayet unless they are provoked by events at Constantinople.

The Mushir, in recommending the disbandment of the Reserves, because there was no longer cause for anxiety, was informed, in reply, that he must "pay the greatest attention because the Moslems were joining the Armenians in revolt against the Sultan." No wonder that the more enlightened among the officials here feel the deepest anxiety at the general situation, not that this is true, but because it shows that the personal fears of the Sultan will prompt him to institute the same system of terrorism in the provinces as exists in the capital. Most of them have hitherto looked upon Aleppo as a safe refuge from Constantinople, and those who have sons or relatives there have

sent for them lest they be retained as hostages, or involved in some political trouble and arrested.

Some of the leading resident Moslems here have confided to me their intention to sell their lands and settle in Egypt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 147.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 118.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 22, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting the extraordinary measures used for collecting revenue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE

Inclosure in No. 147.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February 9, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the authorities of this vilayet are making most strenuous efforts to raise revenue at a few days' notice. Besides satisfying the demands of the Porte, they have to pay the expenses of the Reform Committee, and meet a havalé for £ T. 7,000, which Shakir Pasha has brought with him for payment by the Aleppo Treasury.

Circulars have been received by the Consular Corps requesting them to compel their protégés to pay all arrears of land tax, adding that if the Consuls fail to do so the Government will proceed to put in execution the provisions of the law, as in the case of rayahs.

The heads of religious communities have been informed that their people have to pay ten years' arrears of military exemption tax within four days.

The amount claimed from the Israelites is about £ T. 11,000, from the Greek Catholics, £ T. 5,000; from the Latins, £ T. 1,000; and from the Armenians, about £ T. 3,000.

As the actual number of Armenians domiciled in Aleppo is only 700, this amounts to a call at the rate of £ T. 4½ per head.

The subscription for military equipment is proceeding, and everywhere a certain amount of pressure is brought upon the Christian population to induce them to contribute.

Probably the same efforts are being made in other vilayets, and I do not anticipate that they will be accompanied here by especial harshness, but I suggest that, in places like Ourfa, Birejik, Zeitoun, Marash, and Aintab, where the Armenian population has been reduced to great poverty, arrears of taxation should be condoned, or payment suspended.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 148.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 1.)

(No. 122.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 25, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 86 of the 9th February, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a *pro-memorid* which I have communicated to the Sublime Porte on the subject of the tortures inflicted on Mr. Seager's employés in prison.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 148.

Pro-memorid.

HER Majesty's Embassy feel it their duty to bring to the notice of the Sublime Porte the account given of his imprisonment by an Armenian who was arrested on account of the disturbances of August last while in the employ of a British subject, who states that he has entire confidence in the story.

After a preliminary examination the prisoner was confined in a small dirty cell in the Bâb-u-Zaktie, which was absolutely dark and infested with rats, which ran over his body and gnawed his clothing. During the first three weeks he was examined nineteen times, and repeatedly beaten until he vomited, and several times he fainted from the effects. Permission was not even allowed him to leave his cell to attend to any of the calls of nature. Subsequently he was confined in a dungeon surrounded by iron bars, where he found another prisoner, who had been kept for three days in water and severely beaten.

Continual attempts were made during his confinement to make him confess that he was a member of a revolutionary body by offering him with immediate death [*sic*].

The effects of torture and confinement eventually weakened the condition of the prisoner to such an extent that he had to be transferred to a hospital.

Similar treatment was inflicted at the end of last year on another Armenian, who was also the servant of a British subject. He was confined in a cell, which was too small for him to lie down in, without any bedding, and was not even permitted to go out of it for natural requirements. At the end of three weeks he, also, was reduced to a state of nervous prostration.

Pera, February 19, 1897.

No. 149.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 1.)

(No. 123.)

Pera, February 25, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the state of insecurity still existing in that vilayet.

I am making representations at the Porte respecting the murder of the Nestorian priest, Quasha Serhan, reported by Major Williams.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 149.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)

Van, February 8, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have received information of the murder of a Nestorian priest named Quasha Serhan. He is said to have been killed by the followers of the notorious Sheikh Mahomed Sadik, and is the cousin of Quasha Dirka, one of the former victims.

The Nestorian tribesmen are much excited at this new outrage, and unless this Sheikh is sent out of the country, I foresee considerable trouble next spring. It is of course hopeless to bring these crimes home to their author through the ordinary channels of Turkish justice. The only possible course is for His Imperial Majesty the Sultan to order his arrest and deportation to some other part of the country. I fancy the Persian Government could easily be induced to make representations in this sense, to insure peace on their border.

I am glad to say that the Armenians of Van have been able to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the local revolutionists to induce them to abandon their nefarious ideas.

The notices referred to in my despatch No. 5 of this year have been withdrawn, and the members of the "Kushnak Society" here have further been induced to write to the Committee at Tiflis, begging them not to make any movement in the coming spring.

Mr. Allen, of the American Mission, who, at my request, has kindly consented to go to Persia and buy cattle, has also promised to try and influence the revolutionists at Salemas. His advice will have considerable weight with them, and cannot fail to do good.

I have therefore great hopes that we shall see tranquillity here in the coming spring. But now that the Armenians have done their part, it is high time that the Turkish Government began seriously to do something, for I need hardly say that up to the present time nothing has been done to encourage the great majority of the Armenians who want only such reasonable and just reforms as shall give them security of life, honour, and property.

The amnesty which has been granted turns out to be not so much a concession to the Christians as a means of "whitewashing" every one who has been mixed up with the ghastly events of last year.

The order for bringing officers of Hamidieh cavalry guilty of civil offences before a court martial remains a dead letter; thanks to the obstructiveness of the Mushir, Zeki Pasha.

The Vali appears to be quite unable to do anything.

A case which has much excited the Armenians of Van illustrates to what a pass the Executive Government has arrived.

A Mulazim, named Sherif, and a zaptieh, named Kuloz, son of Colo, both belonging to the gendarmerie here, had been sent to squeeze some taxes out of a village in Hnigatsa. They imprisoned some men in the village, but finally released them on condition that they should bring them two well-known rustic beauties. This was done, and the girls were outraged. There are other details, but what I have related is quite enough to have these men punished, the more so as they are both notorious characters.

Nothing has so far been done. I shall go and see the Vali to-morrow and ascertain his version of the affair, which of course, as it stands, is far from creditable to the Armenians concerned. In justice to them it must, however, be remembered that the massacres of last summer have completely cowed these wretched people.

Should the facts turn out to be as I have stated, and I believe they are beyond dispute, I shall try and induce the Vali to punish these men. If that is impossible, I hope your Excellency will take the matter up.

I shall have the honour to inform you by telegram if my efforts fail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 150.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(*Received March* 1.)

Sir,

Admiralty, February 26, 1897.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, extracts from a letter dated the 1st instant, from the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Astræa," respecting his proceedings at Alexandretta and the state of affairs in the neighbourhood.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 150.

Captain Barry to Admiral Sir J. O. Hopkins.

(Extract.)

"*Astræa*," *at Alexandretta, February* 1, 1897.

* * * * * * *

3. The present condition of affairs in the province of Aleppo apparently is quiet, but great fears are generally entertained as to the future, in consequence of the authors of the recent massacres remaining unpunished.

4. The attached Petition* by the Armenian Clergy of the district of Payass (a village on the coast ten miles north of this), addressed lately to the Foreign Consuls at

* Not inclosed.

Alexandretta, seems to prove that the Turkish officials are inciting the Mussulman population against the Christians.

5. Also the new concentration of troops in this province causes a certain amount of anxiety, as these men get no pay, and the Contractors have lately refused to supply any more provisions, it is hard to see what the troops live on except loot. At present the Turkish authorities have seized the money of the municipality, but being only a small sum it will soon be exhausted.

6. As far as I can make out it is very clear why the troops are being concentrated in this province. Up to the present 4,000 additional troops have landed, and it is said that there are 20,000 more to come, the garrison of Alexandretta has been increased from 400 to 2,000 men, which is intended to be permanent.

7. I propose on the 3rd February to get under way for tube cannon practice, and will visit Payass and the other villages adjacent, which Mr. Catoni, the British Vice-Consul, thinks may have a good effect, returning in the evening to Alexandretta, where, under the present circumstances, I propose to remain for the present.

No. 151.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 71.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 4, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 68 of the 3rd ultimo on the subject of the arrest of Mr. Macallum by the Turkish authorities at Marash in November last.

I approve the terms of the *note verbale* which your Excellency has addressed to the Porte, claiming an indemnity on Mr. Macallum's behalf as compensation for the treatment to which he was subjected.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 152.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 72.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 4, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 69 of the 3rd ultimo, forwarding a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting on the unsatisfactory state of affairs existing in the Payas Caza of that vilayet.

I approve your Excellency's action in this matter and the instructions sent to Major Massy to visit the district in question, and furnish you with a report.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 153.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 124.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 26, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, transmitting the Mosul news report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 153.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 73.)
Sir, *Baghdad, January* 30, 1897.

I HAVE the honour very respectfully to submit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a news-letter, No. 5, dated the 31st instant from Mr. Nimrud Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 153.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 5.)
(Translation.) *Mosul, January* 21, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that on Saturday last his Excellency Zehdi Pasha, the Wali, caused the son of Aziz Effendi Abdulnoor to be released from prison, that his Excellency sent orders to Mustafa Selim Effendi, the Kaïmakam of Amadieh, and the Naïb of that place, Hafiz Khali Effendi, that they should both withdraw from the duties of their office and come to Mosul to undergo trial and prove their complaints against each other, for the Kadhi (Naïb) complained against the Kaïmakam, accusing him of corrupt acts, oppressions and bribe-taking, which perverted justice, and the Kaïmakam, in concert with the members of the Administrative Council, preferred a Petition in form of Muzbattah with complaint against the Kadhi, asserting that he had cursed Fatmah, the daughter of the Prophet of Islam, and Aysheh, the wife of the Prophet; but it has been ascertained that the accusation of the Kaïmakam against the Kadhi, who is a just and honest person, is false and is due to the Kadhi's refusal to agree with him in furtherance of his objects, or, in other words, due to his continual opposition to him in matters in which he wishes to act unjustly.

Sheikh Muhammad-el-Berazani, whose place is Zibar, has in these days assumed hostility against the Aghas of Akr and Zibar, and plundered their property. After plundering the house of Fatah Agha of Zibar and causing him to fly to the Tiyarieh mountains, he has also plundered a number of houses of the Aghas and the village Bir Safi, of which the inhabitants are Christians, and killed their Headman, and proceeding to Akr with 500 fighting men plundered the houses of certain Aghas. This Wilaiat therefore dispatched Ali Agha, Taboor Aghasi, with about fifty horsemen from the police to check the said Sheikh, but I think the said Ali Agha with the small number of horsemen under him will neither be able to check nor to apprehend the said Sheikh, for he has under him five Kurdish tribes, which consist of more than 10,000 fighting men.

His Beatitude the Patriarch of the Syrian Catholics after making up the amount of the "Inneh" (contribution) into 500 Medjidiés and presenting it to the authorities received the thanks of the Sadr-i-A'azem conveyed to his Beatitude by the Wali in person, who called upon his Beatitude for the purpose. After this the Wali sent to Abd-Yeshoo the Patriarch of the Chaldeans, and to the Bishop of the Jacobite Syrian community, demanding the contributions they promised to make, but as their people do not wish to pay anything, I think they will not be able to fulfil their promise.

(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 154.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 125.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 26, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a very interesting letter which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the state of affairs in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 154.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(Private.)
Kharput, February 15, 1897.

Dear Sir Philip Currie,

I AM writing this as there are several things it may be well for me to mention to your Excellency, although none of them, perhaps, are important enough to form the subject of a despatch.

The Vali has been much pestered, it seems, by telegrams from Constantinople, demanding remittances of money from the revenue of this vilayet. I learn from an official in his suite that some two months ago he was ordered to send £T. 1,800 at the earliest possible date; soon afterwards he received a telegram instructing him to forward £T. 1,400 before the end of March, as well as 15 £T. every week. I very much doubt, however, whether any money whatever has been sent so far. Less than 75 per cent. of the whole provincial taxes due for the present Turkish year have been hitherto paid, even including the arrears collected in Cretan districts; and the deficit in the Budget amounts to upwards of £T. 100,000.

Shakir Pasha's claim for 98,000 piastres for a month's pay due to himself and his suite, who, I learn from a good source, are all at logger-heads, greatly troubled the Vali, who declared, in the presence of one or two guests, that he would rather have £T. 80 a-year with peace than the whole of his wretched vilayet with its worry. After partaking of Raki, however, and dining with the astounding appetite which distinguishes him, he begged the Defterdar to dance a polka with him to drive away care, and the dance took place much to the delight of the onlookers and detriment of the flooring, as the Vali is an enormously obese man.

Raouf Bey is good-natured and weak, timid, and suspicious. He is a cheerful and lethargic man, and not easily depressed; but he needs some one to lean upon, and his support and Fidus Achates is the Defterdar who, I believe, in spite of ostentatious loyalty, heartily despises him.

This functionary is the real Vali, and he makes the most of his position. He sends for the Mutavin whenever he wishes to speak to him, and takes the *pas* of Stepan Effendi on all occasions. The Defterdar is not liked by the Turks.

Stepan Effendi has no backbone, and is absolutely useless in his present position, though he is an honest, harmless man. It would be well could he be replaced by a Greek Rayah, such as M. Veghéris at Diarbekir.

The Mektoubji is a Servian by origin, and seems by far the best man of the four. But the Vali dislikes him, and he has very little weight. The cypher telegrams, instead of being intrusted to him, are worked by the Private Secretary (Rasouf Bey's) who has no official position.

The Minister of War protects and backs, I am told, the Vali, who hates the Commandant, whereas Mustafa Pasha regards him with amused contempt. But they both stand in awe of Tewfik Bey, the Mir-Alai at Kharput, who was concerned in the Sassoun massacre, and has great influence at the Palace. I am acquainted with this officer, who has a most villainous face but very pleasant manners. He look capable of anything.

There is great discontent here with the Sultan's form of Government among the officials and Notables, some of whom have spoken to me very frankly on the subject.

The public prayer upon the anniversary of the Sovereign's birthday lasted only two minutes instead of the usual half-hour, and the "Amins" were, as I noticed, very half-hearted. There seems, also, to be a revirement in favour of the Christians.

About three weeks ago a personage called the "Deli Khoja," who has great influence over the local Moslems, preached a sermon in the great Mosque at Kharput, which was crowded at the time. He addressed his congregation as "cows," saying that when one of them ran they all followed; that the Koran ordained that every Rayah who paid his taxes and gave no offence, had the same right to protection of honour, life, and property as any Mussulman; but that the "cows" had broken this law, and had, consequently, incurred the wrath of God and of the Christian Powers.

This incident is the more amusing, inasmuch as the "Deli Khoja's" father, one of the most powerful Mollahs in Asia Minor, himself prayed on the house-top and urged on the mob to attack the American Mission during the disturbance.

Another ground for hope, as far as concerns the Armenians, lies in the fact of a telegram having been received from Constantinople by the Vali, stating that, according to information to hand, the Armenians of Sivas were meditating a "Hujum," or attack, and ordering him to report by telegraph whether any action of the sort was to be apprehended

at Kharput. The Vali conferred, it seems, with Mustafa Pasha and the Defterdar, as the telegram was understood to be an intimation that trouble was desired. It was decided, however, to reply that all was tranquil in these parts. This incident may serve to show how massacres have no doubt been brought about without direct orders from Constantinople.

Turks assure me that no further massacre will occur here unless a foreign occupation takes place, in which case they say no single Christian will remain alive. I tell them that in the event of such an occupation they had best look to themselves.

Two influential Kizil-Bash Aghas from the Dersim recently visited the Vali. One of them was the man alluded to in No. 1 of the 25th May last, as having levied blackmail upon certain Turks after being prevented from participating in the plundering of Kharput. Their visit is officially reported to have been actuated simply by courtesy, but I hear in other quarters, that they were invited here by the authorities, who wished to ascertain how many animals and followers they could place in the field in the event of war. I met them both at the Vali's one evening, and they impressed me very favourably. One of them invited me to visit him at his home near Khozat, but advised me not to come on horseback, as he would certainly steal my horse.

The Kizil-Bash Kurds have more of the making of men in them than the Turks, I think.

The pressure for taxes seems to have abated, but the Tahsildars seem to have acted nearly as harshly as the zaptiehs, by one of whom they are invariably accompanied "for their protection against the villagers," as the Vali naïvely tells me. £T. 300 relief money sent from Constantinople have been distributed at the konak to some of the poor villagers. Part of the money given was taken from them by the zaptiehs at the door for taxes, I am told, and the greater part of the remainder by the Tahsildars, sent after them to the villages as soon as the distribution had terminated.

The Armenians are, unfortunately, most difficult to deal with. Dr. Gates says that his relief work is a constant struggle against the Armenians themselves, who, by their mendacity and greed, invariably try to deceive him; and that he would like to climb the highest minaret in the town and shout, "Repent!" to the Armenians of the four winds.

The Gregorians, Protestants, and Catholics all hate each other; they go regularly to their respective churches, but can neither shoot straight nor speak the truth. In every village where relief is distributed, those who are comparatively well off try to cheat their next-door neighbour—who may be starving—of the aid due to him. The taxes for this year might, in many instances, have been paid without real destitution ensuing, had those who are relatively in comfortable circumstances chosen to help their poorer neighbours. But from what I have myself observed, the Armenian to-day, however well-to-do he be, will let his kinsman starve rather than sacrifice a little grain for him.

A man who was wounded in six places during the massacre, and lay ill for several months at the Catholic Mission, has been abandoned by his brothers, who possess houses and land, and could easily support him and his family, upon the ground that he has lost the use of his right hand, and can no longer work. Dr. Gates has been compelled to rescue the man and his family from starvation.

The Armenians in general of this district seem as hard-hearted as they are ungrateful, and as self-satisfied as they are pusillanimous. They dislike the Turks because they have been deprived of their property—loss of honour or relations seems to affect them less. When they are in fear—as I have myself seen, and as was the case in the Palou villagers during the disturbances—they leave their wives and children to shift for themselves, and make off. They seem to have no fierce desire for revenge for the murder of parent, brother, or wife. An Armenian came to me some time ago saying that his father and brother had been murdered by a certain Turk, who was afterwards imprisoned for the crime. The Turk then sent for him and said, "Why do you prosecute me? I have not killed *you*." The man, after telling me this, asked whether he had not better pardon the Turk to insure his own safety.

The Director of the Régie at Eghin, who was there during the outbreak, has been removed, and is now here without employment. He endeavoured to protect an Armenian employé who was killed, in spite of the Director's efforts, by the Yuz-Bashi in the former's house.

This person, who is a Turk, gave valuable information to Dr. Gates during his stay in that town, and as he owes the Régie £T. 30, and the Vali opposes his nomination here, saying that he is against the Government and an informer, his prospects are in no way bright. He is honest and humane, and therefore—being a Turkish employé—extremely poor. Could his case be brought to the notice of the Head of the Régie at Constantinople, it might be his salvation.

At the suggestion of several Armenian Notables at Mezreh, I called the other day upon the mother of the late Bogos Effendi, Muavin to the Kaimakam of the Charsanjak, and told her how deeply I regretted his death, and how truly I sympathized with her in her great affliction. The poor woman said very little, merely that she had lost six sons, thanks to the Turks, and seemed stunned with grief.

Upwards of 500 Armenians, including men, women, and children, have emigrated from Kharput, since permission was received from the Porte, to America, Russia, and Egypt. Many others propose, I am assured, leaving in the early spring.

Trusting that your Excellency will pardon the length of this letter, and will accept my best wishes for a happy new year, I am, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 155.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 8.)

(No. 126. Confidential.)

Constantinople, February 27, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the incapacity of the Local Director of Public Instruction.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 155.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11. Confidential.)

Kharput, February 6, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to your Excellency copy of a letter addressed to me by Dr. Barnum, of the Local American Mission, dwelling upon the incapacity and ignorance of Murad Effendi, the "Maarif Mudiri," or Director of Public Instruction, in this vilayet; and I beg to submit the following facts in support of Dr. Barnum's statements, whose opinion of the Mudir entirely coincides with my own.

As reported in my despatch No. 20 of the 30th May last, an incident occurred at Euphrates College during the distribution of prizes there soon after the outbreak at Sassoun. The Maarif Mudiri was present at the time, and witnessed the whole scene. Shortly after my arrival at Kharput I begged Murad Effendi, in the course of a friendly conversation in private, to relate to me exactly what had passed. He denied, however, that any such incident had occurred, forgetting possibly that he himself had complained thereof to the authorities here.

Some months ago Dr. Gates' secretary—a well-educated and strictly truthful man—was sent for by the Mudir, who received him roughly, and told him to inform Dr. Gates and Dr. Barnum that they had hired houses for their schools without permission, and that he intended to close them.

Upon another occasion he said to one of the college teachers: "Say to Dr. Barnum and Dr. Gates, 'Why do you stir up the Armenians?' I advise them not to continue in a course which has already brought such disaster upon the people."

Upon hearing of this insulting message I lost no time in calling with Dr. Gates upon the Vali, with the object of demanding an apology from the Mudir. Raouf Bey summoned him immediately, but he denied, with some agitation, that he had ever sent any such message.

The Bibles alluded to in the inclosure to this despatch had been presented by the Mission to the Armkir prisoners at Mezreh upon the latters' own request. Murad Effendi, however, seized the books. He pointed out verse 1, chapter xii, of Daniel, which speaks of "Michael, the great Prince," and a passage in the Psalms where the word "Gentiles" is rendered in the Armenian version by the term "Hetanos." These verses, he declared, were "muzir" (harmful), "Hetanos," meaning, he said, "Islam."

I brought this matter to the notice of the Vali, reminding him that the Mudir's

action constituted an insult to Christianity in general, which the Sultan himself would scarcely venture to offer.

Raouf Bey seemed much annoyed, said that the Maarif Mudiri was an ignorant man, and at once gave orders for the Bibles to be returned to the Mission.

The copies of the Psalms mentioned in Dr. Barnum's letter have also been given back.

One of the later feats of Murad Effendi was to close the Protestant school at Mezreh, which was opened, however, a month ago at the Vali's orders.

Several Turkish officials have derided, in private conversation with me, the Mudir's ignorance and folly. They assure me that when the man was first nominated here, some thirteen years ago, he could scarcely read, and that even now he cannot write properly; and, further, that instead of closing schools, he would be far better employed in going to school himself. His appointment, it seems, was the result of his marrying into the family of some monied and influential Turk at Constantinople.

The removal of Murad Effendi from this vilayet, and transfer to some position where his mendacity, ignorance, and fatuity would no longer impede the progres of public instruction, is greatly to be desired.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 155.

The Rev. H. N. Barnum to Vice-Consul Fontana.

Dear Mr. Fontana,

Kharput, February 5, 1897.

SOME eighteen years ago a Board of Education was organized here, according to the Regulations then newly adopted. For several years the Board consisted of local members only, but about thirteen years ago the present Mudir, Murad Effendi, was sent from Constantinople as the Superintendent of Schools for the whole vilayet. At that time we were much perplexed with the question of the best method of teaching the Turkish language in our own schools, through the lack of suitable text-books. I at once gave him a cordial welcome to this district, and asked him to consider our schools as a part of his field of effort, and especially to help us arrange a programme for the teaching of his own language. He professed great friendship, and promised his help, but we soon learned that he had no education, that he knew nothing about the organization of schools, and nothing about the methods of teaching. In answer to our frequent solicitations he has never made a single practical suggestion.

A large sum of money has been expended for salaries, &c., since Murad Effendi came here, but it would be difficult to find any tangible fruit of it, except in the large building erected for the Idadie School, which is generally acknowledged to be of little or no practical value. There are few schools of the primary grade, and they are of little worth. In fact, there is no system whatever. The most intelligent officials who have been here have often testified with sorrow to the utter unfitness of Murad Effendi for the position which he holds, and the consequent waste of money and the loss of opportunity. One evidence of his narrow-mindedness you yourself have seen in his refusal to allow Bibles to be given to prisoners, and his keeping possession of them as "damaging" books, and refusing to surrender them till compelled to do so by the Vali, and even threatening to burn them. When he gave up the Bibles he refused to surrender two copies of the Psalms.

Murad Effendi has often, upon one pretext and another, closed Protestant village schools, and he has seemed to be on the look-out for a chance to shut up all such schools. Raouf Pasha, the present Vali of Erzeroum, when Vali here, informed the Mudir, after he had closed a school without reason, that it was his business to open schools, and not to close them.

It is generally understood that Murad Effendi has influential friends at the Palace, otherwise it is inconceivable that a man without education, and so utterly unfitted for the position, could be appointed to such an office and hold it so long. Of the great need of a good system of education in this district, and of the readiness of the people to welcome good schools, and of their desire for them, you are a witness. There is a great field of usefulness open to an intelligent, earnest, liberal-minded Maarif Mudir in this district, and the Government would reap the benefit of it through the uplifting and improvement of the people themselves. If there is one thing pre-eminently needed in securing the "reforms" so long promised, it is honest and capable men, and such can be secured only through good

schools, through the reformation of the individual life, the building up of individual character. Without any increase of expense, the right sort of a man could give a great impulse to education throughout this whole district.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) H. N. BARNUM.

No. 156.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 127.) *Constantinople, March 1, 1897.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular officers at Angora, Sivas, Beirut, Broussa, &c., respecting the mobilization of Reserves and movements of troops in their respective districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 156.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.) *Angora, February 20, 1897.*
Sir,

IN continuation of my telegrams of the 17th and 18th instant on the subject of the calling out of eight battalions of Reserves (Redifs) of the Angora Sandjak, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the men are still coming in from the outlying villages, and that preparations, such as the purchase of mules, &c., are being made by the Angora authorities, in case the troops in question should be called upon for active service.

All these warlike measures of the Turkish Government which, it is understood, are directed against Greece, have been very far from invoking a corresponding enthusiasm on the part of the Mussulman population. All my information pointing on the contrary to the fact that it would be only with feelings of positive reluctance that the latter would enter into warlike operations of any kind, even with a country so inferior in military strength as Greece, fearing as they do that these operations would give rise to further complications of which they are unable to foresee the end. I need scarcely, moreover, point out to your Excellency the great sacrifices which a sudden mobilization of this kind has entailed upon a population so purely agricultural as that of the Angora Sandjak—even before the order for mobilization. I am informed by a gentleman who has recently visited a district (Yabanabad) from which a part of the Reserves are being drawn, complaints were loud on the part of the husbandmen as to the difficulty of tilling the fields owing to the insufficiency of manual labour.

I should add that on first receipt of the news of the order for mobilization considerable apprehensions were entertained by the Christian part of the population of an ebullition of feeling on the part of the Mussulmans, and consequent danger of disorder. These apprehensions, however, I am glad to be able to report have so far not been realized, the town remaining quiet, and the attitude of the Mussulman inhabitants being on the whole peaceable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 156.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13.) *Angora, February 24, 1897.*
Sir,

MY telegram of the 22nd instant will have informed your Excellency of the departure on that day from Angora for Ismidt, by special train, of a battalion of Reserves, 750 strong, being the first instalment of the Reserves of the Angora Sandjak, the order for mobilization of eight battalions of which was reported in my telegram of the 18th instant.

I have now the honour to report to your Excellency that a further battalion of Reserves, 800 strong, drawn principally from the Bala Caza of this sandjak, left Angora this morning for Ismidt also by special train, thus making a total departure up to the present of 1,550 men; to these should be added a further contingent, fifty in number, which left Angora yesterday by ordinary train in charge of some sixty horses for transport purposes, &c.

The preparations connected with the dispatch of these men to their destination seem on the whole to have been carried out fairly expeditiously by the Angora autorities. I am informed, nevertheless, that the latter were obliged to have a recourse to certain of the leading inhabitants of the town in order to raise a sum of £ T. 400 in ready money, without which the detachments could not have left.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 156.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 14.) *Angora, February 26, 1897.*
Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 13 of the 24th instant, reporting the departure up to that date from Angora of two battalions of Reserves with transport horses, numbering in all 1,610 men, I have now the honour to report to your Excellency a further departure this morning from Angora by special train of the Kalaidjik (Angora Sandjak) battalion of Reserves, numbering 800 men, and of the half, or 400 men, of the Tchangri (Castamouni Vilayet) battalion, or a total of 1,200 men in all. The remaining 400 men of the Tchangri battalion who have been left behind in Angora will, I understand, leave either to-day or to-morrow with the transport animals and ammunition train of the two battalions.

In addition to the above, information has been received here that the Bey Bazar (Angora Sandjak) battalion, making the fifth of the eight battalions now under mobilization and numbering 800 men, was dispatched yesterday to Ismidt from Sari Keui, a station rather more than half-way on the line from this town to Eski Shehr, the total departures of troops from the Angora Vilayet up to the date of the present despatch thus amounting to 3,610.

I learn, further, that the purchase or horses for cavalry and artillery is being actively carried on by the Angora authorities, a supply, I understand, of some 300 having been ordered to be raised. Some fifty have already been collected, the animals I am told being of a good class, the prices given ranging from 10 to 16 Turkish liras, and in certain cases even higher.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 156.

Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 3.) *Sivas, February 16, 1897.*
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday a telegram was received ordering the Redifs to be called out and held in readiness in the three Cazas: Azizia, Tunnus, and

Sarnisakli. The Redifs of these three cazas belong to the Division, consisting of sixteen battalions, that has its head-quarters at Kaisarea, in the Angora Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

Inclosure 5 in No. 156.

Vice-Consul Gilbertson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.) *Broussa, February* 22, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on Saturday night the Military Commander, Hakki Pasha, was for nearly three hours in telegraphic communication with the Minister of War at Yildiz.

It appears he received instructions to send the troops to the nearest ports, as the Broussa Reserves left yesterday for Moudania; those of Kirmasti and Michalitch for Panderma; the Redifs of Ghuemlek are ready at that port; those of Bilejik and Senhud have left by rail for Ismidt; and the Reserves from Adranoz are expected to-morrow, and will leave the following day for Moudania with Commander Hakki Pasha.

These troops, I am informed, will be transported by special steamers to Dédéagatch, and from thence will proceed by rail to the Greek frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN GILBERTSON.

Inclosure 6 in No. 156.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13.) *Beirut, February* 16, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 7th instant three companies of Redifs were landed at the port of Lattakia by the Ottoman steamer "Tayif," from Alexandretta, and on the following day the battalion of Redifs of the Lattakia district was disbanded.

On the 10th instant the 4th battalion of the 56th Regiment, being Redifs of the district of Gebélé, embarked at that port on board the "Sukutli" bound for Mersina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 7 in No. 156.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.) *Jerusalem, February* 16, 1897.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 8 of the 11th instant, and to my telegram of the 12th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Consular-Agent Amzalak, reporting the embarkation at Jaffa of 1,780 Redifs in the Ottoman steamer "Ali Saïb Pasha" for Alexandretta. I am also informed that two battalions of Redifs were shipped a few days previously at Gaza for the same destination.

Nearly seven battalions of Redifs which were recently called out for service have, accordingly, left this district. The battalion of Redifs from Jemaïn, which had been doing duty in Jerusalem, as was reported in my despatch No. 41 of the 23rd November last, was a short time ago disbanded, together with part of another battalion, and its place was taken by a battalion of regular troops which had returned from the Hauran. The garrison at Jaffa consists also at present of regular troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

Inclosure 8 in No. 156.

Consular Agent Amzalak to Consul Dickson.

(No. 8.)

M. le Consul, *Jaffa, le* 11 *Février*, 1897.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le vapeur "Ali Saïb Pacha," de la Compagnie Ottomane Mahsoussée arriva hier dans notre port et partit le soir même; 1,780 soldats Rédif s'embarquèrent à son bord pour Alexandrette.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) H. AMZALAK.

Inclosure 9 in No. 156.

Vice-Consul Velasti to Sir P. Currie.

M. le Consul-Général, *Inéboli, le* 23 *Février*, 1897.

JE me vois en devoir de vous informer du mouvement et passage des troupes Ottomanes arrivant de Castamouni, provinces et autres villes de l'intérieur voie d'Inéboli.

D'après les informations obtenues ensuite des ordres très pressés le passage qui aura lieu prochainement par le littoral de la Mer Noire et Chemin de Fer d'Angora monte à 300 bataillons de Rédifs et quelques Mustafiz pour remplir le nombre.

Ceux de notre vilayet répartit comme suit :—

1½ bataillon d'Inéboli et ses vilayets; 1 bataillon d'Abana; 1 bataillon de Djidé; 1 bataillon de Castamouni, et en tout 15 bataillons et 3,000 chevaux de notre vilayet, qui s'embarqueront d'ici.

Les 5 bataillons de Rédifs déjà prêts attendent cinq vapeurs pour être embarqués pour destination inconnue.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) V. VELASTI

Inclosure 10 in No. 156.

Vice-Consul Dussy to Sir P. Currie.

Excellence, *Rodosto, le* 27 *Février*, 1897.

JE crois de mon devoir de venir vous informer que depuis le 24 de ce mois nous avons journellement deux ou trois vapeurs de la Compagnie Mahsoussée et des transports d'État qui viennent débarquer des troupes Turques et des munitions. Jusqu'à ce moment neuf vapeurs sont arrivés portant environ 13,000 à 14,000 hommes d'infanterie ainsi que 2,000 chevaux et mulets de charge. Ces troupes aussitôt débarquées sont dirigées à Mouratli-Kieupedi, station de la ligne des Chemins de Fer Orientaux distante de 23 kilom. d'ici et de là transportées à Salonique pour aller aux frontières.

Toutes ces troupes sont des réservistes et proviennent des vilayets d'Angora, d'Ismidt, et de Brousse.

D'après les renseignements que j'ai eu quatre-vingt-dix régiments passeront d'ici pour aller à la frontière.

Le Gouvernement Turc appelle sous les armes les réservistes de la marine.

Dans le cas où j'aurai d'autres nouvelles je me ferai un devoir de vous les communiquer.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) M. DUSSY.

Inclosure 11 in No. 156.

Vice-Consul Misser to Sir P. Currie.

Dédéagatch, le 26 Février, 1897.

Excellence,

J'AI l'honneur de faire part à votre Excellence que six trains militaires composés de 480 wagons de troupes et munitions de guerre venant de Tchorlou ont traversés notre ville cette nuit et ont été dirigés sur la ligne Jonction-Salonique.

Tous les wagons des Chemins de Fer Orientaux et ceux de la Jonction-Salonique sont mis en réquisition par le Gouvernement Ottoman.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) J. A. MISSER.

No. 157.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 129.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 1, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting the effect of Cretan affairs in Smyrna and the arrival of refugees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 157.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)

Sir,

Smyrna, February 25, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that, on account of the very large Greek community in Smyrna, recent events in Crete and Greece have been followed here with the keenest interest, sympathy being naturally on the side of the mother country. Athenian newspapers are smuggled in and read with the greatest interest, and daily private code telegrams are received, the news contained being dispersed, not only all over the town, but also posted to the interior.

There has been, and still exists, a certain amount of nervousness in foreign and native Christian circles, lest the hostile action of the Greek Government and people might not induce a counter-demonstration on the part of the Mussulman population, and the arrival, two days ago, of an Austrian steamer with over 200 Mussulman refugees from Crete, which is probably a first instalment of further shiploads, has not tended to quiet people's minds.

Up to the present there have been none of the usual preliminatory signs of preparations, open or secret, among the Turks of this town to attack the Greeks in retaliation for what Mussulmans are reported to be suffering in Crete.

The Governor-General and his subordinates are, however, on the alert, and, if not hampered by unforeseen obstacles, can be relied upon to do their best to prevent or stop disturbances, should they be provoked by Turks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 158.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 131.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 1, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 638 of the 11th August, 1896, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the return of the Special Turkish Commission for the Hauran affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 158.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Damascus, February 3, 1897.

WITH reference to Mr. Eyres' despatch No. 31 of the 29th July, 1896, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Special Turkish Commission sent here for the purpose of studying and reporting on the Druse question has left Damascus on its return to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 150.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 133.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 2, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana reporting on the deplorable condition of the Payas district.

I have made representations to the Grand Vizier on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Major Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)

Sir,

Payas, February 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to state that in accordance with your Excellency's telegraphic instructions of the 29th ultimo I have arrived in this sub-district, no other suitable person being available to depute for the duty, and after full and thorough investigation I have the honour to submit the following report on the deplorable condition of the Government and Christian population.

The Christians of the Payas Caza, or sub-district, are distributed chiefly in the following large villages, all grouped together, about one-and-a-half hour's horse journey north of Payas, except Najarli, some eight hours' distant.

Chok Merjuman.—700 Armenian families, about 4,000 souls. No Moslems in this village.

Euzerli.—180 Armenian families, about 1,000 souls; 60 Moslem families.

Ojakli.—350 Armenian families, about 2,000 souls; 200 Moslem families.

Chaili.—20 Armenian families, about 100 souls; 200 Moslem families.

Najarli.—60 Armenian families, about 300 souls; no Moslem families.

This Christian population of some 7,500 souls is surrounded by violent Moslem

villagers, who, unrestrained by Government, look upon it now as a sacred duty, and a profitable one, to injure and to oppress their Christian neighbours, treating them like dogs, and never losing an opportunity to plunder them. In the latter part of 1895 these people suffered terribly, so that to-day those who have a roof over their heads are looked upon as fortunate. Any who were left with means after those events have long since lost it through the payment of bribes to Government officials to secure them from imprisonment on false charges, or to obtain their liberty when thus incarcerated.

The result is one of utter misery. One village, Ojakli, had over one half of the Christian houses burnt to the ground, and all their movable property destroyed or robbed.

The present state of the majority of these villagers is one of utter destitution. I have carefully inspected these villages and inquired into the matter, and can personally testify to these facts. No part of this province is in so miserable a condition.

I am afraid I can hold out no hope of amelioration so long as the present Governor-General of Adana, who tolerates and encourages this oppression of Christians, and the present Kaïmakam of Payas, who is little removed from an imbecile, retain their posts.

Any improvement in the situation during the past fifteen months in this province is due to my having forced the Governor-General to a certain line of action. He has met all my representations with lying replies, as in the present case of Payas, assuring me that all was in perfect order, which, indeed, I have always found to be true from this point of view—in a perfect order of Christian oppression—when obliged personally to inquire on the spot in order to force his hand.

During the last year Payas sub-district has gone from bad to worse from misgovernment to anarchy and chaos. This is directly due to the evil influence and lethargy of the Governor-General of Adana and to the Governor of Payas. The removal of the former official is a primary and necessary reform, without which all others will be futile. The Kaïmakam of Payas, Mahommed Fehmi, should be similarly treated, and that without a moment's delay. This post was last filled by a drunkard, a Vekil, who only sought to fill his own pocket, and with the present utterly useless official, your Excellency can picture better how the year has been spent than any words of mine can convey. I shall only say that matters were comparatively prosperous when I visited Payas in May 1896.

Any Christian venturing beyond the precincts of his village or Christian quarter is fallen upon, beaten, and plundered, if not killed. During the last fortnight two men have been killed, a third shot through the shoulder, whom I have myself seen.

All Christian lands are now in Moslem hands, tilled with Christian ploughs and oxen, sown with Christian seed, but all harvests going into Moslem garners. The sole privilege allowed to the real owners is the payment of taxes on their lands, which are levied with ruthless severity on ground farmed by others and on houses long since burned.

If objection be raised imprisonment results, from which liberty is only regained on payment of heavy bribes to every class of Government official.

To fill their cup of misery these Christians have quartered upon them, under the pretence of affording them protection, a battalion of the most vile Arab soldiers, commanded by a weak old man of some 70 years of age, Major Muhamed Thefik.

On the 4th instant, while I was present in Chokmerjumen, this rabble regiment, having exhausted all supplies from the starving inhabitants, only having received 2 Medjidiehs pay in the last fifteen months, and being in as great a state of indiscipline as the rest of the Turkish army which I have seen in this country, proceeded to sack the Chok Merjumen bazaar. All shops had to be closed, the owners flying for their lives. I called on the Major at once and spoke to him in very plain language, but he hardly knew what I was saying, as I am told he had been hiding in fear for his life from his own men, who had threatened to kill him.

As I passed through the bazaar to try and re-establish confidence and order, I am told that the soldiers and Bashi-Bazouks behind me used foul and threatening language, saying that they would massacre all the inhabitants on my departure.

I am informed that the battalion has received sudden orders to move to its own district, Lattakia. I shall inform your Excellency should this not prove true, as orders for its immediate removal should be sent.

On the 4th instant, the Major, Muhamed Thefik, quite disregarding the laws, seized some hundred pack animals for his projected move without any indent on the Moukhtars, or Headmen. These are practically lost to their owners.

Since their arrival these soldiers have done nothing but plunder and terrorize, leaving neither vegetables, fruit, fowls, nor cattle. The loss is the greater as the fruit

crops here are very valuable. Not even the body-linen of these wretched inhabitants has escaped, all being stolen while drying in the gardens. The presence of the soldiers has been of no sort of advantage to the Christian villagers, who are still greater prisoners through their presence, and the Moslem villagers are at all the greater liberty to cut off and plunder all who by chance venture out.

Meanwhile, the Government officials look on at these dastardly acts, piling on abuses and using methods for levying money unfairly, which only the ingenuity of the Turk could think of. The commercial tax or "temettouat," the real estate tax or "omlak," and most other taxes have been increased 50 per cent. this last year, although Moslems are farming the Christian lands. Taxes are enforced on houses burnt by Moslems last year. Sheep and goats plundered are still taxed. The road tax of 12 piastres a-head (about 2*s.* 3*d.*) is collected, but not one penny is expended in repairs of the stony tracks called roads, so bad that they are left by travellers to traverse the neighbouring fields.

Justice is a thing unknown. Many cases are now tried under the religious code which should belong to the civil code, because by this means, for the last twelve months, Christian evidence alone is not considered sufficient proof. If objection be raised the question is asked: "What, Giaour, are you not satisfied with our religious laws?"

In case of disputed wills, Government claims 2½ per cent. from the youngest child for a settlement; now not only do they claim from every member of the family, but the fee is more than doubled. Moreover, Government steps in even where the will is not disputed, and the property is seized if the above tax be not paid.

In cases of death, taxes are still collected for many years afterwards.

All these abuses and misrule this wretched people are prepared to bear, they tell me, if only they are given means to gain a livelihood by safety to till their fields and to go and come in trade.

To recapitulate. The state of these villages is wretched beyond description. In one, Najarli, a Lieutenant Shupuru, in command of a so-called "guard" of twenty men, is behaving like a perfect demon, plundering and enslaving the people, and raping the women. I have demanded his removal. In the other villages the inhabitants are on the verge of starvation, many houseless, all without proper clothing for this severe weather, unable to gain one penny for bread, churchless and schoolless in many cases, their lands farmed by Moslems, oppressed in the collection of taxes, mulcted of their last penny by unprincipled officials whose every moment is taken up with corrupt practices, and plundered and terrorized by the most lawless and undisciplined band of marauders ever dignified with the name of soldier—such a picture will, I trust, give your Excellency an idea of the state of the Christian population of Payas sub-district, the horror of whose State nothing short of personal observation can cause to be thoroughly understood.

The most urgent necessities to improve this dreadful state are:—

1. The immediate removal of Kaïmakam of Payas, and the nomination of an energetic, well-disposed, strong-charactered successor.

2. The severe reprimand of the Governor-General of Adana, and his removal.

3. The appointment of a Mudir for the villages around Chok-Merjumen—a Christian.

4. The withdrawal of the troops from Christian villages, and the location of well-conducted companies in the surrounding Moslem villages.

5. The restitution of all Christians' land to the rightful owners, with guarantee for safe possession.

6. Dispensation from all taxation until the people have been able to farm their own lands for at least one year. The Moslems who seized them to pay the taxes meantime.

7. Government compensation for the inculculable loss inflicted on these Christians by its lawless practices.

But whatever your Excellency considers it right to demand and to enforce I would beg to point out the extreme urgency of this matter. Hours, even, are of importance in obtaining for these suffering wretches relief to body and mind.

If your Excellency can grant some relief from the charitable funds, I am sure that no more urgent case now exists in this country. I have spoken on the subject to the Rev. W. W. Mead, Missionary, residing at Adana, in whose field these villages are situated, and that gentleman most kindly consents to receive and to distribute any relief sanctioned. I would also return to Payas, and assist him while superintending the reforms your Excellency shall enforce. A sum of 500*l.* would be of considerable benefit, and if confidence be re-established, and laws be restituted, there is hope that, under respectable government, matters would quickly improve.

May I beg that your Excellency will cause telegraphic information of any money granted for these villages to be sent to me, so that I may concert with Mr. Mead as to its distribution without loss of time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY,
Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Adana.

No. 160.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 134.) *Constantinople, March 3, 1897.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 60 of the 27th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General, forwarding a Petition addressed to me by several Druse Notables of Mejd-el-Shems.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 160.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 14. Confidential.) *Beirout, February 20, 1897.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 5 of the 22nd ultimo and my telegram of the following day relative to the persecutions inflicted upon the Druses since the close of the recent Hauran campaign, I have the honour to transmit herewith a Petition addressed to your Excellency by several Druse Notables of Mejd-el-Shems, which is substantially a translation of that addressed to the Grand Vizier and to the Sultan's Chief Secretary, complaining of various acts of cruelty and injustice, for which it has been impossible to obtain any redress, in spite of repeated attempts to bring the matter to the notice of the local authorities.

The Petition was transmitted to me through influential Druses of the Lebanon, who are anxious that your Excellency should be made acquainted with the deplorable condition of their co-religionists in that district, but they particularly requested that the appeal should not be made known to the Turkish Government.

I have reasons for believing that the statements of the Sheikhs are well founded, and that a continuation of the oppression will inevitably lead to fresh troubles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 160.

Petition.

A son Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre à Constantinople :

NOUS, Soussignés, habitants de la contrée de Majdel-Schamse, avons l'honneur d'exposer à votre Excellence que depuis les événements du Hauran, auxquels nous sommes demeurés complètement étrangers, nous n'avons cessé d'être en butte à toutes sortes de vexations, d'injustices, et de persécutions, tant de la part de nos voisins que de la part des autorités locales. Nous avons réitéré nos plaintes tantôt au Vilayet de Syrie, tantôt au Caïmacanat de Kouaïtra, dont nous dépendons, et toutes sont demeurées sans aucun résultat. Au contraire, leurs injustices s'accroissent de jour en jour, et la persécution devient de plus en plus acharnée, de sorte que nous sommes réduits à la plus grande extrémité, et notre situation désespérée est devenue digne d'attirer l'attention de Sa Majesté Impériale, qui ne permet jamais que de pareilles injustices soient exercées sur des sujets soumis et pacifiques. Car, malgré que nous n'ayons été aucunement mêlé aux événements du Hauran, question qui fut elle-même tranchée et arrangée, les autorités locales se sont fait cependant un devoir de nous persécuter pour mériter les bonnes

grâces de leurs supérieurs. En effet, c'est par leur instigation que nos voisins de Djebbatat-el-Zaïte, de Buanias, s'imposent la tâche d'intenter contre nous les procès les plus étranges, et de déposer les accusations les plus injustes, pour des faits supposés depuis dix ou vingt ans, et que la loi elle-même regarde comme périmés.

Nous citerons ici certains faits pour démontrer l'agression et la persécution auxquelles nous sommes en proie.

Un certain Achmet Sleïman Mennem, de Majdel-Schamse, ayant été à Djebbatat-el-Zaïte, fut massacré par les habitants du dit village, qui lui prirent 1,500 piastres. Des plaintes furent portées au Gouvernement Local, qui ne daigna pas même les écouter.

Un autre, nommé Salman Ommran, fut attaqué aussi par les habitants de Djebbatat, qui lui prirent son cheval et le laissèrent à demi-mort; le fait fut porté à la connaissance des autorités, et elles y demeurèrent indifférentes.

Le nommé Saleh Mahmoud, en revenant de Hasbaya, fut massacré et pillé par les habitants de Kafar Chouba, et justice ne fut pas faite.

Un autre, nommé Saïd Sabbagh, fut tué sur le grand chemin par les habitants de Hâbbariat.

Zaïdan Wehbé, du village de Haddar, en allant à Djebbatat-el-Kachab, fut tué par un gendarme Kurde, qui lui prit son cheval; une accusation fut déposée contre l'auteur de cet attentat, et fut encore rejetée.

Un certain habitant de Hasbaya, établi à Majdel-Schamse, fut mandé à Kouaïtra, siège du Caïmacanat, d'où il fut relâché. En revenant à Majdel-Schamse il fut poursuivi et tué par un gendarme Kurde.

Les habitants de Djebbatat nous ont volé plus de 600 chèvres et plus de cinquante têtes de bétail, et les autorités sont toujours demeurées sourdes à nos plaintes.

Le nommé Housseïn-el-Mosri vola deux juments de race à deux habitants de Majdel; les deux juments se trouvent chez l'Émir Mahommed-el-Faour-el-Fadl; des plaintes furent portées à ce sujet, et furent encore inutiles.

Les pareils méfaits sont innombrables, et leur énumération serait trop longue; nous nos contentons des faits déjà cités.

De plus, les autorités locales jetèrent dans les prisons de Damas, sans aucun délit, vingt-deux personnes de Majdel, sept d'Aïn-Koniat, et dix-neuf autres de Haddar et de Shita, qui y gémissent depuis plus de quinze mois, laissant leurs familles et leurs enfants en proie à la plus grande désolation. Leurs maisons ayant été incendiées, ils vaquent sans abri; privés de soutiens, ils sont réduits à se nourrir d'herbes et de racines.

Les habitants de Baggata (village voisin de Majdel) en ont été expulsés; leurs maisons furent brûlées, et leurs biens pillés. Ils furent chassés des terres dont ils ont payé l'impôt et la dîme.

Aussi nos troupeaux de chèvres, accoutumés à hiverner dans les plaines d'Aere (Akka), furent décimés par le froid qui sévit à Majdel-Schmase. Nous avons réitéré les Pétitions au Gouvernement Local pour nous permettre de les mener vers leur séjour d'hiver à Akka; on est resté sourd à nos prières.

Quant à la sûreté, elle est complètement bannie de notre contrée. Le sang du Druse est versé impunément, et par cette alternative nous sommes réduits à demeurer dans nos foyers, vivant d'herbes et de racines. Les gendarmes viennent tous les jours sous prétexte de faux procès supposés contre nous, exercer toutes sortes de cruautés et d'infamies. Ils nous rançonnent pour de l'argent, que nous sommes obligés d'emprunter aux taux les plus exorbitants—40 pour cent—pour satisfaire leur cupidité. Si nous nous refusons à leur payer la somme qu'ils exigent, on nous mène en prison. Si quelqu'un est tué, son sang est impunément versé.

Telle est notre situation, Excellence, depuis deux ans jusqu'aujourd'hui, quoique nous n'ayons pas été mêlés aux événements du Hauran, quoique cette question elle-même se fut arrangée, nous voyons cependant la persécution redoubler et s'accroître de jour en jour. Il n'est pas de la justice que le Gouvernement nous traite ainsi à nous, sujets soumis et fidèles, qui payons régulièrement les impôts et les redevances, et qui sommes disposés à verser jusqu'à la dernière goutte de notre sang au service de Sa Majesté Impériale, pour la seule cause que nous sommes Druses.

Nous sollicitons donc ordre au Vilayet de Syrie afin qu'une enquête sérieuse soit faite par des Magistrats justes et intègres, qu'il soit mis un terme aux agressions et aux iniquités qu'on exerce contre nous, qu'on nous accorde parfaite sûreté et sécurité, et qu'on défende enfin l'entrée de nos demeures aux gendarmes Kurdes, car notre situation est devenue des plus critiques, et notre désespoir est porté à son comble.

(Signatures in Arabic.)

Majdel-Schamse, le 13 Février, 1897.

P.S.—Après la rédaction de cette Pétition on nous communique un ordre du Gouvernement; cet ordre porte que les trois quarts des terres de Majdel-Schanse nous soient enlevés et donnés aux habitants de Djebbatat-el-Zaïte. Malgré que nous soyons en possession de ces terres depuis un assez long temps, et que la loi elle-même considère toute accusation intentée après une époque aussi prolongée comme périmée. De plus, du temps du feu Hassem Pacha, Vali de Syrie, les mêmes habitants de Djebbatat avaient hasardé une telle démarche; mais des ordres du vilayet les arrêtèrent tout courts. Aujourd'hui, on nous signifie la défense de labourer ces terres, et on enjoint de les donner aux habitants de Djebbatat. Nous devenons ainsi sans terrains, et privés par là des moyens de pourvoir à notre existence.

No. 161.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 8.)

(No. 135.)
Pera, March 1, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1076 of the 24th December last respecting the sentence passed on the Bishop of Bitlis, I have the honour to report that the Grand Vizier has informed me, in reply to my representations on the subject, that the Criminal Court of Appeal at Bitlis found the Bishop guilty of conspiracy, and after due consideration condemned him to death. The Court of Cassation of Constantinople confirmed this verdict, and his Highness states that there is no reason to doubt the justice of the decision.

The sentence of death will not, however, be carried out, but in accordance with the general amnesty has been commuted to imprisonment in a fortress until he "amends his ways."

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 162.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 8.)

(No. 136.)
Constantinople, March 4, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of three despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo respecting the critical state of affairs there, and expressing regret at the removal of Edhem Pasha.

I have made representations at the Porte respecting the condition of the vilayet in concert with the French and Austrian Embassies, which have received similar reports.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 162.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8. Confidential.)
Aleppo, February 17, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to supplement my telegrams Nos. 11 and 12 of this date by further observations regarding the urgent necessity of retaining the services of Marshal Edhem Pasha at Aleppo.

I would remark, in the first place, that his Excellency Shakir Pasha, on arrival here, took up his quarters in the house of a very fanatical Moslem named Zeki Pasha Muderiss Zadé, in an exclusively Mussulman quarter, and, with him, lives a Russian lady, said to be his wife, whose presence caused considerable comment in the neighbourhood, so that it was deemed advisable that he should remove to another part of the city.

Moslems are naturally susceptible on such a subject during Ramazan.

The wife of his Excellency the Vali is a lady of liberal education, and was frequently to be seen on the balcony or at the windows of her house in European costume, a fact which was freely discussed by Moslems passing down the road, though, since the commencement of Ramazan this lady has carefully avoided being seen in public.

As regards Izzet Pasha, I may observe that however discreet he may be, he cannot help being conspicuous; and so there is a good deal of hostile criticism current among a certain class of Moslems who are heard to say that Aleppo is full of Ghiaour Pashas. With a view to disarm this feeling, both the Vali and Edhem Pasha are very punctilious in their daily attendance at Mosque during Ramazan; but it would be useless for Izzet Pasha to do the same, as he has forgotten how to say the Moslem prayers.

In certain contingencies, this state of public feeling might constitute a great danger here.

On the east side of the city there is a quarter called the Bab-ul-Neerab, which teems with a fanatical Mussulman population. In past history it was the scene of a revolt, when it was bombarded from the Citadel, and the market-place burnt. It was here that a massacre was planned in November 1895, which Edhem Pasha prevented, and these people have never forgotten the disappointment. They heard that at Ainfab and elsewhere Moslems had been allowed a free hand in plundering Christians, and they openly declare that on the first opportunity they will do the same.

If Edhem Pasha remains in Aleppo they will not have this opportunity. They are afraid of him, and of no one else. It is, however, of cardinal importance to do everything to save Aleppo from such a calamity, for the city is so considerable, in every respect, that an outbreak here would be the signal for many elsewhere.

Edhem Pasha is under orders to leave for Elassona as soon as possible, and Ali Mohsin Pasha has been temporarily appointed in his place. I must, however, point out that in view of the fact that Ali Pasha is a Liva (Major-General) of only seven months' standing, and that Shahab-ud-din Pasha is stationed here as General of Division, this appointment is most irregular.

I do not agree with my French and Italian colleagues as to the character of Ali Pasha. They have described him, in official reports, as a man who committed acts of cold-blooded cruelty during the Zeitoun campaign, and, on that account, unfit for responsible command; but my views of his conduct is, that he killed many Armenians in regular warfare, that, in particular, the massacre at, and burning of, the monastry of Furnooz were not perpetrated by his order, but were the work of Circassian Bashi-Bazouks who followed the army into Furnooz. This will, however, always be a matter of controversy, and in any case, it is clear that Ali Pasha's appointment will not command general confidence.

I trust, however, that there will be no question of it, and that Edhem Pasha, who has the public respect and confidence, will remain here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 2 in No. 162.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Aleppo, February 18, 1897.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 4 and 8 of the 8th and 17th instant respectively, I have the honour to report that telegraphic instructions were to-day sent to Marash for one of the Regular battalions at that place to come at once to Aleppo, exchanging with one of the Reserve battalions now here.

This step has been taken from a desire, in the event of Edhem Pasha's removal, to do all that is possible to assure public safety.

It is, however, at all times desirable that Aleppo should be garrisoned by regular troops rather than Reserves.

The Mushir has no Commanding Officers whom he can trust except those of the regular battalions.

He considers that all Officers Commanding Reserves in this district are of the worst description, and there is no remedy as there are none to replace them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 162.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February* 10, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have just received a letter from the American missionaries of Marash, stating that on Wednesday, the 10th instant, there arose a panic in that town, caused by the assembly of a number of Moslems, who paraded the streets in arms, and threatened to massacre the Christians.

The incident was provoked by the arrival of a large party of Zeitounlies in the town that morning, who, however, do not appear to have done anything offensive; but I suppose that the mere sight of them was sufficient to frighten or madden the Moslems, who would be more irritable on account of Ramazan.

The fast appears to be observed with more than usual strictness this year, and great vigilance is being used in enforcing the appointed rules as to fasting and worship. Dr. Fuller informs me that the old custom, for many years fallen into disuse, of punishing delinquents has been revived, and several Moslems, found neglectful of their religious duties, have been publicly punished and disgraced by being led through the streets with blackened faces, and followed by a hooting crowd of boys and zealots.

Dr. Fuller adds, "I know not how far such methods will secure the sanction and approval of the men who make public opinion in this land; many had supposed that the day for such things had passed, even in Turkey. Its chief significance is in the fact that it is one item in a system of measures intended to promote the restoration of old time conditions and practices."

In informing me of the incident at Marash the missionaries state that the authorities did nothing to encourage the demonstration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 163.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 138.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a document which I have received, being a translation of a Manifesto of the Stamboul Committee of the "Ottoman Society of Union and Progress," which has been distributed lately in large numbers in the mosques.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Manifesto of the Ottoman Society of Union and Progress.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN, we have often invited you to union and agreement. Thank Heaven, our cry has not been in vain. Now the time has come for the good news. We have all understood that the greatest enemy of the Islamic and Ottoman world is the great assassin Abd-ul-Hamid and his crew. He wishes to bury us and our country alive in the grave which his bloody hands have dug for us; but let him be assured that he himself will occupy it. For in whatever way possible we will remove their persons from our midst—we will shed blood—we will save our honour and our country.

Brothers, most of the Ulema of our faith and the chiefs of our army belong to our Society; they share our ideas and aspirations. Fear not, be ready when the signal is given. Invite Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and our other fellow-countrymen, for they are also children of the country—they live in it, their interests are mutual, and their rights equal. This is our religion and our law.

Ottomans, you know that for the last twenty years detectives have sown dissension among us and prevented our uniting; there is no one these scoundrels have not oppressed,

no family they have not destroyed. To strengthen our security and union you must at once trample on these traitors. It is the duty of each of us to act in this way in order to be ready for the great contest which is at hand.

Oh, brothers and Ottomans! the day of judgment is at hand. Know that to die is blessed martyrdom, to slay is heroism. We have obtained from the Ulema a Fetva authorizing the destruction of the traitors. The Ulema of the four sects agree that the strife is lawful in order to free our faith and State and country. They have given us the permit of victory. The victory will be ours, for God is the helper of the oppressed.

(L.S.) Ottoman Society of Union and Progress,
Constantinople Branch.

Equality! Justice! Freedom!

No. 164.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 10.)

(No. 140.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 4, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting that Colonel Mazhar Bey had been condemned by court-martial to three years' imprisonment in a fortress with degradation to the ranks for the murder of the Italian Padre Salvatore. The French and Italian Embassies have protested strongly against the leniency of this sentence, and the Council of Ministers have accordingly been reconsidering the case. It is not in their power to alter or revise the verdict of the court-martial, but they have decided that Mazhar Bey should be condemned administratively to imprisonment for life, together with degradation to the ranks, and have forwarded a Mazbata to this effect to the Palace, where it now awaits the sanction of His Majesty the Sultan.

As I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 1046 of the 15th December, 1896, a court-martial assembled at Marash in that month for the trial of Mazhar Bey, and it was agreed that Delegates of the French and Italian Consulates should be present to watch the proceedings. Owing, however, to the unsatisfactory attitude of the Court, the Delegates were obliged to withdraw, and the French and Italian Embassies informed the Sublime Porte that they would refuse to accept any verdict pronounced by such a Tribunal. As a matter of fact the trial resulted in the acquittal of Mazhar Bey, but the French and Italian Embassies insisted upon the retrial of the prisoner at Constantinople, M. Cambon even going so far as to say that in the event of non-compliance with this request he was authorized to leave Constantinople.

The Embassies refused to entertain a suggestion put forward by the Sublime Porte that Mazhar Bey should be allowed to benefit by the General Amnesty, but they finally acceded to the request of the Porte, that the fresh trial should be held at Aleppo, provided that Mazhar Bey should be kept in prison there pending the trial, and that no members of the court-martial which tried him at Marash should be included in the Court to sit at Aleppo.

As I have before stated, the sentence passed by this Court has not satisfied the demands of the two Embassies, and it remains to be seen whether they will succeed in obtaining the Imperial sanction to the proposal of the Council of Ministers that Mazhar Bey should be imprisoned for life.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 164.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12. Confidential.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February* 19, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram No. 14, Confidential, of this date, and to inform you that I am permitted by the favour of his Excellency the Mushir to acquaint your Excellency with the fact that a court-martial was held here yesterday by order of Edhem Pasha, for the trial of Mazhar Bey for the murder of Padre Salvatore, and that the prisoner was condemned to three years' imprisonment in a fortress with

degradation to the ranks. The Court consisted of the following: Bekis Pasha (Ferik) President, and five members: Hikmi Pasha, of Hama; Izzet Pasha, of Tripoli; Rifaat Bey, Chief of the staff to his Excellency Edhem Pasha; Abdul Kader Bey; and Kalid Bey. I find that my French colleague had not rightly understood the message which he received from the Mushir, referred to in my telegram No. 13 of the 17th instant. It was an intimation that the Mushir had received orders to hold a court-martial, and an invitation for the presence of a Consular Representative (whom the French Consul declined to send), but the message was to the effect that Edhem Pasha would see that justice was done, and such a sentence pronounced as would satisfy the two Governments interested in the prosecution. In fact, the Porte desired the prisoner to be acquitted, but Edhem Pasha has all along been convinced of his guilt, and he has on this occasion acted from a desire to show to the French and Italian Ambassadors that he personally would be independent of all pressure from head-quarters.

He assures me that if two witnesses of the actual murder had been found he would have pressed for sentence of death, but the evidence produced showed only the binding of the priest and his party, and the fact of their being brought to the place where the murder took place.

I regret that the departure of the post compels me to close this despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 165.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 11.)

(No. 115.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 11, 1897, 2·30 P.M.

I HAVE communicated to the Grand Vizier a translation of Major Massy's Report on the condition of the Payas district, which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 133 of the 2nd March.

His Highness and the Foreign Minister promised to send the necessary instructions, but, as yet, nothing has been done.

The Constantinople Armenian Relief Committee have assigned Major Massy 500*l.* for Payas, and I think that if he visited the district which lies along the coast near Alexandretta in a man-of-war, it would produce a good effect.

If your Lordship sanctions this course, I should propose to inform my colleagues soon as the necessary orders are given.

I have already communicated Major Massy's Report to them.

No. 166.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 97.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1897, 6·30 P.M.

IT is reported that Nazim Pasha has been appointed Governor-General of Beyrout.

Would not a protest against the appointment be justified if this report is true?

No. 167.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 98.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1897, 7 P.M.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 115 of yesterday's date, and I will request the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send instructions to the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Astræa," which is now at Beyrout, to proceed to Mersina at your request, and to take Major Massey along the coast, so that he may be enabled to distribute relief in that district.

It would be desirable, however, that you should first inform your colleagues of what is proposed.

No. 168.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 81.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 105 of the 11th ultimo, forwarding a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the abuses in the collection of taxes in the Vilayet of Ma'amuret-ul-Aziz.

I approve the representations which your Excellency proposes to make to the Porte on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 169.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 82.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 111 of the 18th ultimo, forwarding a copy of a letter from Mr. Dwight, of the Constantinople Evangelical Alliance, as to the necessity of securing to the Protestant community proper representation in the Administrative Councils of the Empire.

I approve the reply which you have addressed to Mr. Dwight on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 170.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 13.)

(No. 145.)
My Lord, *Pera, March* 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Nazim Pasha, the former Minister of Police, has been appointed Vali of Beirout in the place of the Marshal Fuad Pasha, who was named to that post on his declining the command of the 6th Army Corps at Bagdad, as reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 50, Confidential, of the 20th January.

Fuad Pasha refused to proceed to Beirout except on certain conditions, one of which was that, in view of his high military rank, he should also receive the command of the 5th Army Corps, the head-quarters of which are at Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 171.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 13.)

(No. 117.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 13, 1897, 11 A.M.

I DO not think the appointment of Nazim Pasha, referred to in your telegram No. 97, will be worse than most others under the present régime, although he has had no experience as Governor. As far as this Embassy was concerned, I found him decidedly friendly, and ready to do all he could to comply with my requests when he was Minister of Police. His position at that time was very difficult, and he was made a scapegoat.

No. 172.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 13, 1897, 11·45 A.M.

I HAVE telegraphed to Major Massy, and have informed my colleagues of the dispatch of the "Astræa," in accordance with your Lordship's telegram No. 98.

No. 173.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 13, 1897.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to state that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has recently sent home a report from Major Massy, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, of a visit to the district of Payas, situated on the coast of Asia Minor, about 10 miles to the north of Alexandretta.

This report discloses a most deplorable state of affairs among the Christian population, who are on the verge of starvation, and subjected to extortion and oppression by the Mussulman officials and soldiery.

Sir P. Currie has since telegraphed that he has sent a copy of Major Massy's report to the Grand Vizier, but that, in spite of the promises made by his Highness, nothing has been done to improve the existing state of things. Major Massy has, however, in the meantime, received a grant of 600*l.* from the Duke of Westminster's Relief Fund for distribution to the Christians of Payas, and Sir P. Currie is of opinion that a good effect would be produced if the Vice-Consul visited the district lying along the coast near Alexandretta in a man-of-war for the distribution of this relief.

Lord Salisbury would be obliged if the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty would instruct the Officer Commanding Her Majesty's ship "Astræa," which he believes to be now at Beyrout, to proceed, on receiving a request from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to that effect, either to Alexandretta or Mersina, as may be most convenient, for the purpose of meeting Major Massy, who is now at Adana, and conveying him along the coast of the Payas district, as proposed.

I am to add that Sir P. Currie has been instructed to inform the other Ambassadors at Constantinople of the proposal before addressing this request to the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Astræa."

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 174.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 15.)

(No. 2. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Batoum, February* 24, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that it has to-day come to my knowledge, from an absolutely reliable source, that the Turkish Consulate-General at this port has during the last few days received from the Turkish Government quite a number of photographs purporting to show the wounds received from Armenian revolutionists by Turkish soldiers who were employed in quelling the disturbances that took place at Constantinople on the occasion of the attack on the Ottoman Bank last year.

The photographs (which I have seen) exhibit the injured men in various attitudes, with their alleged wounds already dressed and bandaged—in some few cases wounds on the face are visible. An inscription in the Turkish language, at the foot of each photograph, gives the name and number of the regiment to which the men belong, and also a short account as to how and when they received their injuries, it being distinctly stated in each case that the wounds were inflicted by Armenian revolutionists. I may mention that these photographs were sent forward in batches, and I noticed that in some instances the same men had been photographed two or three times over but in different positions.

These photographs are accompanied by a circular, that has been forwarded to all the Turkish Consulates in Russia, with instructions to the effect that the various officials to whom it is addressed should use their utmost zeal in showing the pictures to Mahommedans of all ranks and classes in Russia, with a view to intensify their feelings of hatred and revenge, and thus induce them to contribute more liberally to the fund that is now being raised for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the Turkish army, or in other words, for the arming of the Bashi-Bazouks.

The photographs in question are being forwarded in succession from Consulate to Consulate.

In view of pending negotiations for the introduction of reforms into the Turkish Empire, the above incident is not without a certain significance, as affording proof of some of the means resorted to by the Turkish Government in order to keep alive feelings of fanaticism among Mahommedans in countries no longer under its rule, not only by appealing to their patriotism and generosity but also by stirring up some of their worst passions.

I am informed that the same steps are being adopted by the Turkish authorities throughout Asia Minor, and, should this be the case, such a course of action seems hardly compatible with the professed desire of the Ottoman Government to moderate and appease the acutely bitter feeling now prevailing between Christians and Moslems in the East.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS.

No. 175.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 15.)

(No. 121.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 15, 1897, 2·30 P.M.

ON the 10th instant Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas telegraphed that some slight disorders had occurred at Gemerek; that, according to the authorities, the casualties were three wounded, and that the whole affair might be regarded as unimportant. Having, however, received more detailed information through the French Embassy, I have to-day informed Major Bulman that the French Consul was pressing for the punishment of the Mussulman rioters at Gemerek, and that he should, therefore, support the representations of his colleague.

No. 176.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 146.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting on the small amount of work done by the judicial inspectors in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 176.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Smyrna, March* 3, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that Hulim Bey and Avraam Effendi, the judicial inspectors for this vilayet and for that of the Archipelago, who have been here some four weeks, have so far accomplished little or nothing in the way of reforms.

Beyond recommending the examining Judges not to retain persons under arrest longer than is absolutely necessary, and giving instructions for increasing the number of

examining Judges from the members of the Tribunal, no real improvement has been made.

In their first reports to the Minister of Justice, sent some two weeks ago, they stated that there were 900 prisoners at Smyrna, of whom 700 have been duly tried and are undergoing their sentences, and 200 are awaiting trial.

The small result of their mission may be due to the Ramazan fast, and as both inspectors are apparently fairly competent and conscientious men, they may do more real work after the Bairam feasts, which commence to-morrow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 177.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 148.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 52 of the 9th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout on the subject of the Druse deserters from Crete.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 177.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Beirout, March 3, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 15th ultimo, with its inclosures (which I beg to return herewith), relative to the attempts made by Druse deserters in Greece to return to their homes by way of Cyprus, I have the honour to report that on the 22nd January last about thirty-five Druses who had embarked from that island on board a small schooner were captured off this coast by officials in charge of the steam-boat belonging to the Tobacco Régie Company, and brought to Beirout, when they were interned in the barracks, being exposed on their way thither to the taunts and jeers of the lower order of the Mahommedans of this city.

As the Régie is not a Government administration but a commercial Society, the conduct of their officials in this matter has formed the subject of much adverse comment.

I beg to add that many Druses have succeeded in landing at different points of this coast in small detachments, and by thus eluding the vigilance of the authorities in regaining their several homes in the interior.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 178.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 160.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 11th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus respecting the flight of certain Druse conscripts and the trial of a prominent Sheikh for having aided his nephew to escape.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 178.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Damascus, March 1, 1897.*

WITH reference to the last paragraph in Mr. Consul Eyres' despatch No. 52 of the 28th December last, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Druse Sheikh Hamad Kaiss has been brought to and imprisoned in Damascus pending his trial on a charge of having connived at the flight of his nephew to America, with a view to avoid conscription. The trial will take place, I believe, after the Bairam.

I may mention in this connection that the Druse conscripts of Rasheya had fled *en masse* to the Lebanon is not quite correct. The facts of the case are these: 100 Druse conscripts from the villages of Hasbeya and Rasheya—nearly an equal number from each—were brought into Damascus under escort, and lodged in the barracks with the other troops. Quite recently thirty-one of these men contrived to escape, but four were subsequently found living in the Meidan quarter of this city. Their arrest was effected on the 26th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 179.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 151.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 9, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting a case of robbery with violence committed by two soldiers on an Armenian trader.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 179.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Kharput, February 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that an Armenian trader named Alexan Jis-covinr was attacked and wounded some two months ago in the town of Kharput by two soldiers, who robbed him, he declares, of a bag containing 215 mejidiés which he was carrying to the American Mission at the time in order to purchase a bill upon Aleppo.

The incident occurred towards evening. The two troopers meeting Alexan in a lonely street, and, seeing something under his arm, ordered him to stop and show them what it was. The Armenian refused to do so, whereupon one of the men fired at him with a rifle (the report of which was heard at the Mission), but missed his aim, and the other struck him over the hand with a sword, wounding him so severely that he dropped the bag, with which his assailants then made off. There were no actual witnesses of the affair, but two Armenians named Aivas and Agob saw the trader count the money at his house before he started out; and the Director of the Mission informs me that he has frequently sold bills to Alexan, who, in one instance, purchased a draft upon London from myself.

Upon hearing of the robbery I immediately communicated with the Military Commandant, who caused the culprits to be arrested; 75 mejidiés were found in their possession.

An action for robbery and violence has been brought against the two soldiers in the Law Court by Alexan, whose statements, together with those of such witnesses as he could procure, have been noted down by the Juge d'Instruction. As the case, however, has so far proceeded very slowly, I have urged Selim Effendi, the judicial inspector here, to expedite matters in order that the 75 mejidiés referred to, which are now lying in the authorities' hands, may be returned to their owner.

Should verdict be given against the defendants—who are still under arrest—they will be tried by court-martial, the Commandant tells me, and will be dismissed from the service and imprisoned.

I do not feel very sanguine, however, as to the result of the trial which is now proceeding.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 180.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 152.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 10, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 111 of the 17th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Baghdad, forwarding a report from the British Consular Agent at Mosul respecting the trial of the Mudir of the Barwarah for alleged ill-treatment of the Nestorian Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 180.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Baghdad, February 12, 1897.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 13, dated the 23rd January, 1897, I have the honour very respectfully to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a further letter, No 6, dated the 4th instant, from Mr. Nimrud Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul, which may be of interest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 180.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 6.)
(Translation.) *Mosul, February 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Reshid Beg, the Mudir of the Barwarah district, Irâs, under orders from his Excellency the Vali, come to Mosul (on Saturday last) in order to undergo trial with those who have complained against him, such as Mar Yeshuyah, the Bishop, and Yuhannâ, the priest, and other Kurds. I have been told that Muhammad Effendi, the Head Writer of the Court of Bidâyat, who is the son-in-law of Sheikh Muhammad, the Nakshbandi, is going between Reshid Beg and the Bishop to make peace, but the latter, refusing such intervention, persists upon prosecuting Reshid Beg and proving the charges which he has brought against him, notwithstanding the various threats offered to him by the partisans of Reshid Beg, that revenge will be taken from him and his community should he not give up his designs and cease from suing the Mudir, and the more so if he should stand acquitted by the authorities.

His Excellency the Vali has dismissed from office Mustofa Selim Effendi, the Kaïmakam of Amadieh, and the Naïb of that place, Hafiz Khalil Effendi, owing to the affairs I reported to your Honour in my previous letter. His Excellency is trying to induce Abdullah Pasha, the Kaïmakam of Arbil, whom Farik Abdullah Pasha had dismissed, to accept the post of Kaïmakam of Amadieh.

Owing to want of funds in the Treasury, the local authorities have since last week commenced to call upon sheep-owners to make advances of half the tax of their sheep for the coming year.

Nothing of the reforms has as yet been carried out on this vilayet.

(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 181.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 153.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 10, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Vice-Consul at Broussa, reporting a declaration made by the Vali of Broussa to the principal members of the Armenian and Greek communities, requesting them to denounce any revolutionists who might arrive in the town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 181.

Vice-Consul Gilbertson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Broussa, March 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Governor-General summoned the principal members of the Armenian and Greek communities to the Konak yesterday, and informed them that the Turkish Ambassador in London had telegraphed to Constantinople that from twenty to thirty members of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee had left for Turkey to unite with the Greeks to cause further disturbances in the Empire.

After making this statement, his Excellency declared that, so far, this city had been free from disturbances, and he hoped the tranquillity would not be disturbed in the future; but owing to the information he had received, it was necessary to take precautionary measures, and he therefore asked them to co-operate with him in this matter by denouncing all suspicious characters and revolutionists that might arrive to incite others to break the peace.

In conclusion, Munir Pasha told them not to be alarmed at what he had said, and requested them not only to avoid frightening their compatriots, but to advise them to continue peacefully at their business, as heretofore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN GILBERTSON.

No. 182.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 155.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 11, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 127 of the 1st March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular officers in Turkey respecting movements of troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 182.

Vice-Consul Gilbertson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Broussa, March 2, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the battalion of Adrianoz Reserves only arrived last night, and left this morning for Moudania, accompanied by Ferik Hakki Pasha.

They will embark on the steam-ship "Taïf," which will convey them to Rodosto. From there they will march to Muradly, and will be sent on immediately by special train to Salonica.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN GILBERTSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 182.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)

Angora, February 28, 1897.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 14 of the 26th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency the following further departures of Reserves, with transport animals, from this vilayet, viz.:—

1. Of the Ayash (Angora Sandjak) battalion, 750 strong, on the night of the 25th instant, from Malikeui, the second station from Angora on the line to Eskishehr.

2. Of 150 transport animals of the Bey Bazar battalion, on the 26th instant, from the Sarikeui Station.

3. Of 106 transport horses belonging to the Kalaidjik battalion, by special train from Angora, on the same date.

4. Of the remainder of the Tchangri battalion, 306 strong, with 78 horses and 45 mules, from Angora, by special train the 27th instant; and

Lastly, to-day, the 28th, of the Tcherkess (Kastamouni Vilayet) battalion, 760 strong, with 110 transport horses.

The above departures, together with those reported in my despatch No. 14 above referred to, thus make a total up to the present date of 5,426 men dispatched from this vilayet. In addition to these, the arrival at Angora is expected of the Kirshehr Yuzgat and Tchorum battalions, but their future movements are, I understand, as yet uncertain.

I have been informed by Tewfik Pasha, the Governor-General of this vilayet, that the military chest of each of these battalions is provided on departure with a sum of £ T. 500. At the same time, I may point out with reference to this statement of his Excellency, that loans from the leading inhabitants of Angora for necessary expenses are still being resorted to by the authorities, Treasury receipts for the sums so obtained being given.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 182.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 20.)

Smyrna, March 3, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that during the last few days there have been signs of military preparations in Turkish official circles.

Orders have been given regarding the prompt transport of the Redifs that are being called under arms for service, it is said, in the 2nd and 3rd Army Corps, and of some 400 or 500 horses that are being requisitioned for the same corps.

At Smyrna and the other seaports they are enrolling sailors to man the war-ships being prepared for sea.

Owing to the expenses incurred and being incurred in connection with these preparations and in sending large supplies of flour and other provisions to Crete, the Local Government is unable, for the present at least, to meet the persistent demands of the Central Government for money.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 4 in No. 182.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)

Angora, March 4, 1897.

Sir,

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch No. 17 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to report to your Excellency the following further departure of Reserves from this town for Ismidt later on in the evening of that day, viz., of the Yabanabad (Angora Sandjak) battalion, 580 strong, with 72 transport horses, but without rifles, which, I understand, will be served out to them at Ismidt.

No. 183*.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 17.)

(No. 67.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, March* 17, 1897, 5·50 P.M.

M. CAMBON has as yet only sent a telegram from Constantinople to M. Hanotaux that disturbances have occurred at Sivas.

He has now been instructed to consult with his colleagues as to the best way to impress on the Sultan that an immediate stop must be put to any recrudescence of disturbances, or the consequences will be of a most serious nature.

His Excellency hopes Sir P. Currie may receive similar instructions from your Lordship.

I learn, further, that the 200 men with 115 transport horses of the Haimana and Sivrihissar battalions, mentioned in my despatch above referred to as having remained behind, also left Sarikeui for Ismidt yesterday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 183.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 16.)

(No. 123.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 16, 1897, 11 A.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis telegraphed yesterday that the following telegram had been received by the Vali from the Mutessarif of Saiet:—

"Six Mussulmans have been committed to trial for the murder of the Relief Agent, Yusuf Yunan, one of whom has confessed that he killed the man with a knife, which has been found. Only 4 liras and 33 medjidiehs and some personal effects were stolen, all of which has been recovered."

Mr. Monahan adds that the Vali has promised to give the necessary instructions as to the £T. 500 said to be missing.

No. 184.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

(No. 135.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 17, 1897.

THE French Ambassador informed me to-day that his Government had received news of an occurrence near Sivas which appeared to them, under present circumstances, to be very serious.

Some Mussulmans had entered an Armenian church at Gemerek on the 9th instant, and fired on the officiating priest and his assistants. Other Mussulmans had assembled on the spot, declaring their intention to massacre the inhabitants of Gemerek and pillage their houses, and had only been kept back hitherto by the firm attitude of the Armenian population. Some of the rioters had been arrested by the Turkish authorities.

M. Cambon had been directed to call the attention of the Sultan to these deplorable circumstances, which seemed to point to a renewal of the events that had deluged Armenia with blood a short time ago, and his Excellency said that M. Hanotaux considered it very important that Sir P. Currie should be authorized to support the representations of the French Ambassador.

I replied that I would at once instruct Sir Philip Currie to place himself in communication with M. Cambon, and join with him in making the necessary representations to the Turkish Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 185.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 18.)

(No. 124.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 18, 1897, 10·45 A.M.

THE Druses of the Hauran.

Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus telegraphs that a general amnesty has been granted.

No. 186.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 18.)

(No. 125.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 18, 1897, 10·45 A.M.

IN reply to the inquiries reported in my telegram No. 121 of the 15th instant, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas states that the information sent by the French Consul is taken from a despatch of his own now on its way, of which he gave the French Consul a copy.

He adds that he has sent a special messenger to Gemerek to collect evidence, and that he has made a demand for the punishment of the rioters, which will be supported by the French Consul.

No. 187.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 107.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 18, 1897, 2 P.M.

A REPORT has reached the French Government that a massacre at Sivas is imminent.

You should communicate with the French Ambassador on the subject, and make the necessary representations to the Porte in concert with his Excellency.

No. 188.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

(No. 121.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 18, 1897, 4 P.M.

I HAVE taken immediate steps to instruct Sir P. Currie in accordance with M. Hanotaux' request, conveyed to me by your telegram No. 67 of the 17th instant, on the subject of the reported disturbances in the neighbourhood of Sivas.

No. 189.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 110.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 19, 1897.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 118 of the 13th instant respecting the dispatch of Her Majesty's ship "Astræa" to Mersina, but I am now informed that that vessel, having been ordered to Delagoa Bay, is not available for the purpose.

Is it, in your opinion, of urgent importance that a ship of war should be sent?

No. 190.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 19.)

(No. 129.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 19, 1897, 7·45 P.M.

I HAVE seen M. Cambon on the subject of your Lordship's telegram No. 107 of the 18th March. He says that he did not propose to make any representations about Sivas, but only referred to the events reported in my telegrams No. 121 of the 15th and No. 125 of the 18th instant. He thinks therefore that there must have been a misunderstanding on the part of his Government.

No. 191.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 19.)

(No. 130.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 19, 1897, 7·50 P.M.

BRITISH Vice-Consul at Sivas telegraphs that disorders, apparently of a serious character, have just occurred at Tokat.

I intend to make representations.

I have informed M. Cambon.

No. 192.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 20.)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 20, 1897, 10 A.M.

I HAVE received your Lordship's telegram No. 110.

I had hoped that the representations I am making for the dismissal of the Vali of Adana and the Kaïmakam of Payas might be strengthened by the visit of a man-of-war to those parts, and I had already informed the Porte that one was proceeding thither.

In my opinion, it would not be advisable to give up the plan if there is a ship available.

Despite the promises made by the Sultan through the Minister for Foreign Affairs, nothing has yet been done for the dismissal of the Vali and Kaïmakam.

No. 193.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 20, 1897.

I AM directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, stating that Her Majesty's ship "Astræa" would not be available for the conveyance of Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana to the coast of Payas, but that if the visit of a man-of-war to that district was considered of special importance, other arrangements might be made.

I am to transmit herewith the decypher of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* in reply to a request for his opinion as to the special importance of the proposed visit, from which it will be seen that his Excellency considers that the plan should not be abandoned if it is possible to spare a vessel for the purpose.

Under these circumstances I am to express Lord Salisbury's hope that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty may find it possible to detach one of Her Majesty's ships for the object desired by Her Majesty's Ambassador.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 194.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 20.)

(No. 134.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 20, 1897, 8·55 P.M.

A TELEGRAM from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas reports that a serious disturbance has taken place at Tokat, whence the French Embassy have also heard of the murder of fifteen Armenians.

We have agreed that the Dragomans of the Six Embassies shall make strong representations to the Porte.

The punishment of the murderers will also be demanded at Sivas by Mr. Bulman in conjunction with his French colleague.

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* No. 192.

No. 195.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 20.)

(No. 137.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 20, 1897, 10·35 P.M.*

I FIND that by mistake the other telegrams concerning the murder of the Relief Agent in the Vilayet of Bitlis reported in my telegram No. 123 have not been repeated to your Lordship.

Saird being nearer Diarbekir than Bitlis, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at the former place heard of the event before Mr. Monahan, and reported it to me on the 11th instant. I at once instructed Mr. Monahan to urge the Bitlis authorities to arrest the culprits and to recover the money, but since the telegram repeated to your Lordship I have heard nothing more from him, but am now telegraphing to him again.

I lost no time in urging on the Porte the necessity of rigorous measures.

No. 196.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 138.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 21, 1897.*

MAJOR BULMAN telegraphs that the situation at Sivas is critical. The Military Commandant, who is of a fanatical disposition, is acting for the Vali, who started last night for Tokat, and disorders are feared unless he is at once informed that he will be held answerable with his life for any disturbance. The Armenians are hiding in their houses.

The authorities admit that fifteen persons were killed at Tokat.

Major Bulman suggests that orders be sent to the Vali for the immediate execution of the rioters.

One of the women wounded at Ghemerek has died, and Major Bulman suggests that the Turk who struck her ought to be at once executed.

No. 197.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 139.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 21, 1897, 10·45 A.M.*

DISTURBANCES at Tokat.

My immediately preceding telegram.

In answer to representations made yesterday by the Austrian, Italian, French, and British Embassies, Tewfik Pasha stated that there were only fourteen killed and wounded, and that the authors of the riot had been imprisoned. He went on to say that orders had been sent by the Grand Vizier to all the provinces of the Empire, enjoining on the authorities to leave nothing undone to insure the maintenance of tranquility.

In view of the critical situation at Sivas, he promised that special orders should be sent there by telegraph.

I shall send Mr. Block, my first Dragoman, to the Porte again to-day, to make sure of these orders being clear and peremptory.

No. 198.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 140.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 21, 1897, 10·45 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 131:

I have the honour to state that I caused representations to be made yesterday pressing for the removal of the Vali of Adana, and for the adoption of the necessary measures at Payas.

My colleagues also acceded to my request, and sent their Dragomans with similar orders.

There is, however, no indication, so far, that the Sultan intends to fulfil his promises.

No. 199.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 159.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus respecting the non-payment of Government servants, both civil and military, and the disaffection prevailing among both officers and soldiers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 199.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10. Confidential.)
Sir, *Damascus, March 1, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the discontent existing among the troops here has reached such a pitch that it would be no matter of surprise to me to hear of open manifestations of disloyalty to the Head of the State. I am informed on good authority that the officers generally constantly make use of the most violent and seditious language with reference to all those in authority, whom they consider as responsible for the present state of affairs; not even sparing the Sultan himself.

I am informed by Mr. Meshaka, the Chancellier of this Consulate, that he was recently told by a "Liva" (General of Brigade) stationed here, that he had received no pay for eight months. If this be the case with a man of his high rank your Excellency may imagine what is likely to be the experience in this respect of officers of inferior grade. I hear that the only officers who received any pay at the beginning of Ramazan were the Mushir Abdullah Pasha, of Cretan notoriety, and Osman Seifi Pasha, who commands the Redifs. It is true that towards the middle of the month the magnificent sum of 1,000 piastres was divided among the officers of three battalions, but this was all. One officer appeared on parade the other day without his sword, and on being asked by his Colonel the reason of such extraordinary conduct, replied that he had sold it in order to buy bread! He was, of course, immediately put under arrest, and will be severely punished, but I hear that many of his comrades are reduced to a state verging on destitution. On one occasion recently the unfortunate soldiers, who had been fasting all day, found that there was no "iftar" (the evening meal during Ramazan) forthcoming after sunset, the reason being that the local army contractor, to whom thousands of pounds are owing for supplies furnished to the troops, was no longer in a position to provide the amount of food required.

It is hardly credible but it appears to be true that the officers are being forced (practically) to contribute to the Military Aid Fund, half-a-month's pay being demanded of each. The Colonel of one regiment being severely rebuked by the

Mushir (Abdullah Pasha) for not having collected this subscription from the officers under his command, replied, that he could not be guilty of such an inhumane act; that he was ready to lead his officers and men into battle, but not to rob them of the few remaining piastres they possessed.

I might cite many other instances in proof of the utterly bankrupt condition of the local Treasury, but will merely mention that on a recent occasion hundreds of Moslem women surrounded the Government house in which the Acting Governor-General (the Cadi) and the Defterdar had taken refuge, and with howls and imprecations demanded the money due to their husbands, brothers, and sons who are in Government employment, and who, like all the rest of the world [*sic*] are months and months in arrears with their salaries.

It is commonly reported that the Redifs are to be called out after the Baïram, in which case, I am assured, serious troubles are to be apprehended.

Your Excellency will understand that the state of affairs generally here is critical.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 200.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March 22.*)

(No. 161.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 12, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 61 of the 9th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting on the progress made in the execution of the reforms in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 200.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Bitlis, February 6, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatches No. 64 of the 6th December and No. 67 of the 22nd December, 1896, I have the honour to report that I have heard nothing of oppressive tax collecting in villages near Bitlis town during the last three or four weeks. Two lately-appointed "tahsildars" (unarmed tax collectors), one Christian and one Mussulman, are at work in these villages, that is to say, in villages to a distance of about three hours' journey from Bitlis. So far, some real reform would seem to have been executed.

In the town of Bitlis, too, taxes are being collected with a mildness which is exciting comment, though no great severity was ever shown in the town.

In Akhlat, a caza beginning about five hours from Bitlis town, there is a lately-appointed unarmed Christian tahsildar. He, however, is accompanied by zaptiehs, who do the real work, and in the old fashion. For instance, in Zagag, a Christian village of Akhlat, there was, ten days ago, a zaptieh with the tahsildar, and the two had spent five days in the village, giving the usual trouble. I am told that a villager of Zagag, who owed 10 piastres taxes, was, within the last fortnight, tied to the tail of a zaptieh's horse, and thus dragged two hours' journey to the chief town (Akhlat), and that he was there let go because a Turk told the zaptieh that he had better not bring him before the Kaïmakam in the bruised and wounded state in which he was. That the man did go back to his village with wounds and bruises on him seems certain, but there is no other evidence beyond his own assertion to prove that he was tied to the horse's tail, so that it has been thought best to make no complaint.

In Agag, a Christian village of the same caza, half-an-hour distant from Zagag, zaptiehs were tax collecting three days ago, and had been staying some days, and other zaptiehs were ten days ago in the same village.

Agag has been three times plundered by Kurds: the first time in November 1895, the second time in December 1895, and the third time in September 1896 (see my despatch No. 60 of the 10th November, 1896). It lost in the three plunderings in all, 100 oxen, 17 cows, 285 sheep, 10 donkeys, and 1 horse. There are about thirty houses in the village. Some of the oxen taken had been provided out of relief funds. The village has still 200 or 300 sheep, but I believe has only 20 oxen left.

In Gidzvag, also in Akhlat Caza, a large village, said to have lost 2,000 sheep in last September's plundering, the collection of taxes for the coming financial year has already begun, though in the regular course of things it would not begin until after the 13th March (n. s.), and I hear the same story from Moush Plain.

To Mojkok, a small village of Tadig Nahié, four or five hours from Bitlis, zaptiehs have of late been continually coming, according to statements made to me four days ago by the priest of the village, whom the Vali had summoned to Bitlis to demand from him the village taxes. According to the same informant, the Government threatens to sell all the oxen that remain in the village after the plundering of the winter of 1895. The priest admitted to me that large arrears of taxes, extending over eight years, were due to the Government, which now claims 15,000 piastres from the village. Only about fifty oxen are, said the priest, left in the village, and they are absolutely needed for ploughing next spring.

I advised him to make a Petition to the Vali, in which he might point out that oxen required for ploughing should not be taken for taxes.

From Boulanik Caza I hear continually, from thoroughly trustworthy sources, that zaptiehs are in villages, staying for considerable periods, and, as a general rule, ill-treating villagers in the customary manner, as, for example, by beating them, spitting in their faces, and pulling out hairs from their beards.

In the large Christian village, Sheikh Yacub (Boulanik Caza), three zaptiehs, under a "Yuzbashi" (Captain), have been quartered for the last three months continually tax-collecting. They are, however, behaving well, though, of course, they never pay for any of their food or forage, and the villagers do not wish to complain of them.

In the Moush Plain, too, taxes are at the present moment being collected in the old fashion.

The Vali has repeatedly told me that a thorough reform in tax-collecting has been carried out.

I have come to the conclusion that his statements on this point are not to be entirely believed, but I think it right to add that his administration in general seems to be fairly satisfactory.

A Christian policeman has been appointed in Gopi, the chief town of the Boulanik Caza, and one in Malasgierd, the chief town of the caza of that name. The latter is said to be a well-known spy.

Beyond the measures which I have mentioned in this and previous despatches there are, so far as I can learn, no reforms being executed in this vilayet at present.

The new Christian Muavin (Assistant Kaïmakam) of Koulp (see my despatch No. 61 of the 24th November, 1896) has not yet left Bitlis for his post, though the Christian Muavin of Shervan has taken up his duties there.

There seems to be a general feeling that the reforms have been stopped, but that a new departure is shortly to be expected.

The vilayet remains, I believe, free from the presence of dangerous revolutionists, but there are in certain towns and villages, and especially in Akhlat Caza, local Armenians, called Mishagists, whose work appears to be to supply information to an Armenian journal in Tiflis, and some few of whom have from Russia revolvers and money. These Mishagists will probably do no harm, unless to persons who denounce them to the Government as revolutionists.

Rizagh, the Hassananli Hamidié Chief, who was under some sort of arrest in Mush (see my despatch No. 61 of the 24th November, 1896), was very soon allowed to return to his native place, Kazmi, a village in the Malasgierd Caza. He is said to have bribed the Mush authorities heavily, and to have therefore thought fit to raise supplies after his return home. However this may be, he certainly about three weeks ago entered with his men into Derig, a Christian village of ninety houses near Kazmi, and remained for some days plundering it freely. It is said that he and his men violated women of the village and committed other brutalities. The village was, I hear, nearly empty for some days

after his departure, most of the villagers having gone to Gop to take shelter and to complain to the Kaimakam. At any rate, some of them seem certainly to have fled to Gop. Fifteen zaptiehs were sent to Derig, and the people have now returned from Gop, and are living in the village under their protection. The Vali told me he had not yet fully investigated the case, but admitted that Rizagh was a troublesome Hamidié.

No trouble is reported as having yet arisen from the return of the Hamidiés, who have been arriving in the vilayet from Constantinople during the last week, and though my information from Sairt and Guenj is very insufficient, there appears to be, on the whole, little actual disorder to complain of at present. It cannot, however, be said that there is any general feeling of security or hopefulness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 200.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Bitlis, February* 20, 1897.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 7 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report that the official Gazette of the vilayet of the 15th instant publishes the names of twenty newly-appointed Mussulman Secretaries to nahiés in the Sairt, Moush, and Guenj Sandjaks. The arrangements for nahiés should now be nearly complete, as, according to the Vali, the only remaining difficulty was to find Secretaries. I have not heard that any Christian Secretaries have been appointed. Two Christian Mudirs have been recently elected or appointed in the Hizan Caza (Bitlis Sandjak), but do not appear to have yet taken up the duties of their posts.

The same number of the Bitlis Gazette publishes under the heading "Instructions to Tahsildars" thirteen articles dated the 18th (30th) November, 1312 (1896), and confirmed by Imperial Decree, which enact in effect that taxes are to be collected in conformity with Chapter XIV (Article 30) of the scheme of reforms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 201.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 162.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 12, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, reporting the death of the Greek Patriarch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 201.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, February* 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Mgr. Gerassimos, the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem, who had been ailing for several months past, died on the 21st instant, and was buried the following day with much ceremony, the funeral being attended by most of the members of the Consular Body in uniform (the French Consul-General was present with the whole of his staff in full uniform, as well as the Russian Consul-General), by Government officials, and by a large concourse of people.

The Bishop of Philadelphia (Salt), who was the delegate of the Patriarch at the Coronation of the Czar last year, has been appointed, with the approval of the

Sultan, Acting Patriarch, and the Patriarchal Synod are now taking the usual steps for the election of a successor to Mgr. Gerassimos. Fifteen names are on such occasions submitted by the Acting Patriarch, through the local authorities, to the Sultan, who generally rejects about half the number of candidates. From among the remainder three are again chosen by the Synod, who then proceed to vote for one of the three as Patriarch.

It is at present premature to predict who is likely to be the Patriarch elected, but there are three candidates who appear to be in greater favour than the rest. The first is the Acting Patriarch; the second, the Archmandrite Arsenius, who is representative of the Patriarchate at Moscow; and the third is the Archmandrite Photios, Chief Secretary of the Patriarchate, and who was once elected Patriarch in 1883, but was disqualified on account of his youth. These three candidates, I understand, are not opposed by the Russian Consulate-General.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 202.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 161.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 13, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting a panic among the Christians of the town, and the remission of the military exemption tax for two years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 202.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Van, February* 22, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that the "bedliat," or tax in lieu of military service, has been remitted for two years in this vilayet. The effect has been excellent, and the Armenians are greatly encouraged to hope for better times.

Owing to the reported blowing up of the mosques at Constantinople, there has been a rather serious panic among the Christian population of this town. The General Commanding took every means to prevent any outrages on the part of the lower-class Mahommedans, and confidence is now restored.

I am inclined to think this scare was started by the "Young Turks," who are becoming rather prominent in this town. It appears to have been generally believed that some attempt would be made during this Ramazan to dethrone the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 203.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 172.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 17, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, reporting the occurrence of a small mutiny among the troops there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 203.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Jeddah, February* 22, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that a small mutiny again occurred here a few nights ago, in which 125 non-commissioned officers and men of the troops stationed here assembled shortly after midnight at a mosque in the town, from the barracks outside the gates, to demonstrate their claim to have their service-expired teskereh delivered them.

A bugle was sounded, but there was no disorder, and their officers were able to induce them to withdraw quietly and immediately upon receipt of their papers.

The incident attracted little or no attention, and such cases, as your Excellency is aware, are by no means uncommon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 204.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 173.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 17, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the great pressure exercised in the collection of taxes in certain villages in the Caza of Chemish Ghesek. I had already, on receipt of Mr. Fontana's telegram, made representations to the Sublime Porte on the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 204.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Kharput, March* 1, 1897.

AS reported in my telegram to your Excellency of the 23rd ultimo, great pressure appears to have been exercised in the collection of taxes at Hoghi, in the vicinity of Kharput, as well as at two villages situated in the Caza of Chemish Ghesek.

Hoghi comprises, I am informed, 180 Christian houses, which were all plundered during the disturbances. The ordinary annual tax there amounts to from 40,000 to 41,000 piastres; 32,000 piastres have, with great difficulty, been scraped together by the Armenians there during the past year, and paid into the tax-collectors' hands; payment of the residue of 8,000 piastres, which represents the debt of the most destitute among the villagers, is now, it seems, being insisted upon.

The village of Sisné, near Chemish Ghesek, contains thirty-five Christian houses, which were looted without exception; 5,000 piastres have been paid by the Armenian villagers, and 3,000 piastres more are demanded from them, in total disregard of the heavy losses they sustained at the plunderers' hands.

Mamoussa is a small village not far from Sisné. All the Armenian houses there, to the number of fifty-one, were pillaged from roof to basement. Between 7,000 and 8,000 piastres have already been paid by their occupants during the past year, and an additional sum of 4,000 piastres is now being pressed for by the authorities in order that the ordinary yearly tax may be levied in full.

In both Sisné and Mamoussa the Mussulmans carry off, I am assured, the grapes of vineyards and gardens belonging to Armenians, and cut down their trees for fuel.

In a telegram of the 16th ultimo I had the honour to report that a Mazbata had been drawn up by the authorities here denying that abuses had been committed in connection with the levy of taxes, or that any other persons than the tahsildars,

appointed under the scheme of reforms, were intrusted therewith; and the Mazbata was signed, I regret to state, by both the Catholic Bishop and the Armenian Murakhass of Kharput, from the latter of whom, nevertheless, I have received constant complaints as to the violence used by zaptiehs whilst collecting taxes from the villagers.

The inclosed Turkish document is an original letter written by the "Zabita Memouru" of Chemish Ghesek in reply to a Petition addressed to him by the Elective Council of Mamoussa, begging that the soldiers sent to their village to expedite the collection of taxes might be removed on account of their vexatious behaviour towards the villagers. The letter in question is dated the 26th January last, whereas the tahsildars were enrolled and entered upon their duties (as reported in my despatch No. 61 of the 3rd December, 1896) more than three months ago.

I have laid before the Vali the complaints of the Mamoussa and Sisné Armenians regarding the excessive taxation to which they are subjected; and I handed him, at the same time, a copy of the note written by the "Zabita Memouru" to the Elective Council of the former village. Raouf Bey thereupon sent a telegram to the Acting Kaïmakam of Chemish Ghesek, ordering the withdrawal of the soldiers, and prohibiting any further pressure for taxes in the villages referred to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 204.

Reply to a Petition from the Elective Council of the Village of Mamoussa.

(Translation.)

I HAVE forwarded the report you sent me to the Mir-Alai Bey.* His answer is, "I can't have this sort of thing; as long as the money remains unpaid the soldiers shall not leave."

You are recommended, therefore, to find a way out of your difficulty in time, to collect the money from the people of your village and pay it over.

(Seal of the Zabita Memouru of the
Chemish Ghesek Caza.)

January 14 (26), 1897.

No. 205.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 174.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 17, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, respecting the lawless attitude of the Kurds in the villages of Palou. I have expressed to Mr. Fontana my approval of his action, as reported in his despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 205.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 14.)
Sir, *Kharput, March* 2, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that some time ago certain Christians from the Palou villages came and complained to me of the behaviour of a number of Kurds, who, under the leadership of four Kurdish Notables, were in the habit of whiling away their evenings by tormenting the Armenians of the villages in

* Colonel Shévky Bey, Acting Kaïmakam.

question. These Kurds, it seems, used to parade the streets after dark in bands of four or five men, knock at the doors of such Armenian houses as still exist until they obtained admission, and force the inmates to prepare food for them if they were hungry. They then made overtures to any women or girls who attracted their attention, told the husbands and brothers that they would get a good beating the next evening, and, besides carrying off any object to which they took a sudden fancy, turned, before leaving, whatever furniture there might be in the house upside down.

The Palou villages lie within the Vilayet of Diarbekir, and are consequently outside the jurisdiction of the Vali of Kharput. The soldiers stationed there, however, belong to the brigade of which Mustafa Pasha, the Military Commandant here, is General. I called, therefore, upon the Commandant, and explained the matter to him, pointing out that the Kurds meant no great harm, very likely, by their nightly rambles, and were perhaps in need of some healthy recreation after the fatigues of the day; but that they had no right to seek such recreation at the expense of the Armenians. I then suggested that orders should be sent to the soldiery to put a stop to the escapades of the Kurds, and to remove the four Notables alluded to—with whose names I furnished him—to another district.

The Commandant promised to act upon my suggestion, and a few days ago one of the Armenians who had complained to me came from Palou and informed me that the four troublesome Kurdish Notables had been expelled, and that the sleep of the local Armenians was no longer disturbed by nocturnal visitors.

I have thanked Mustafa Pasha for his prompt action in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 205.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 175.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting that some Armenians have been relieved from the payment of taxes for two years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 205.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Aleppo, February 22, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to my despatch No. 8 of the 9th instant, that the Armenian Bishop of Aleppo has received a notification from the Patriarchate that the Sultan has granted a delay of two years for the collection of arrears of virgu and soldier tax in the case of Armenians, in places where massacres have occurred.

This favour will be greatly appreciated in the Vilayet of Aleppo, where the Armenians have suffered so severely.

The collection of money, for military purposes, is in the meantime carried on with great energy.

The Mukhtars of the Moslem villages are informed that their village is assessed to pay a certain amount, that no man shall pay less than 5 piastres, and none more than 200 piastres, but that failure to pay will be punished by a fine.

It causes much murmuring, and naturally so, for the villagers have to pay their tithe, and, perhaps, a fifth of that tithe more for this purpose, to say nothing of the fact that their sons may at any moment be called out for service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 207.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 176.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 17, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 90 of the 26th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the condition of the Kurdistan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 207.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Van, February 27, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report, in reference to correspondence as marked in the margin:—*

1. The murder of Quasha Sirhan was reported by me in my despatch No. 7 of the 6th February. I brought the matter at once to the Vali's notice, but beyond obtaining confirmation of the fact that the man was killed, nothing practical has resulted. I know nothing of Koka Brimo. If he had been murdered I should have been nearly certain to hear.

2. Malik Mamro has, I know, fled to Persia. He is a very unimportant person.

The really important question, apart from the general state of insecurity in Shemdinan and Gawar, is that of the Metropolitan. He is at present with Mar Shimoon, where he is perfectly safe. The question of permitting him to go to Persia is at present under consideration. The Mutessarif of Hekkiari has deprecated his going, on the grounds that he would be followed by other non-tribal Nestorians, and that his presence in Persia would tend to induce those who have already fled to remain there.

I have pointed out to the Vali that if the Government cannot protect him in his own home, the least they can do is to send him, with a suitable escort, to Persia, to wait for better times.

Failing the arrest and exile of the Sheikh, undoubtedly the best thing to do would be to place these districts under martial law, and to send a battalion, under a trustworthy officer, who should administer the country for a year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 208.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 177.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana on the condition of that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* Sir E. Goldsmid, January 15, 1897; and Memorandum (not printed).

Inclosure in No. 208.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 29.) *Adana, March 7, 1897.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Baïram festival has passed off quietly in this province, so far as reports have, up to the present, reached me.

I apprehend no excesses.

There is a fear, generally, on the part of Europeans in the interior that the Moslem population may be excited into hostile action towards Christians of all nationalities in the event of reforms, distasteful to the Government, being proposed and enforced by the European Powers.

In my opinion, much depends on the nature of the reforms proposed. General administrative reforms would be hailed by most Moslems with delight, and the deposition of the reigning Sultan, should such become necessary, would give rise to but little excitement, if suddenly brought about and his successor quickly appointed, but would, on the contrary, be as welcome to many Moslems now groaning under oppression as other more general governmental reforms.

I trust the above remarks may not be considered beyond my province. My desire is to convey to your Excellency the impressions I have been able to form from contact with all classes during a year's travel in various parts of this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 209.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 178. Confidential.) *Constantinople, March 17, 1897.*

My Lord,

THE Secretary of the Armenian Patriarch called at this Embassy a few days ago, and said that His Beatitude was much disheartened by the inaction and bad faith of the Ottoman Government in all matters affecting the Armenian question. The twelve points mentioned in my despatch No. 41 of the 17th January had been mostly rendered illusory by the numerous qualifications and conditions attached to them, and the few concessions which, after being revised by the Palace, retained any solid value had not been executed. His Beatitude had therefore addressed a further complaint ("plainte") to the Sultan, which ended with an expression of his intention to resign if his representations were neglected. He desired to communicate to Her Majesty's Embassy a translation of this document, a copy of which I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith. I have not yet had leisure to compare the Patriarch's list of prisoners with the information furnished to me by Her Majesty's Consular officers, but it seems to be longer than might be expected. I shall shortly report to your Lordship on this point.

The Secretary added that both the Patriarch and the Palace were apprehensive that the Armenian revolutionary party were preparing some outbreak. His Beatitude thought that the Committees were waiting anxiously to see what reforms would be proposed by the Powers, but that if they heard nothing before Easter they would proceed to create some disturbances similar to that of August last with a view to recalling public attention to the Armenian question, from which it had lately been distracted by events in other quarters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 209.

Complaints of the Armenian Patriarch submitted to His Majesty the Sultan.

1. L'AMNISTIE accordée au mois de Décembre dernier n'a pas reçu jusqu'à présent son entière exécution. Les personnes exilées par voie administrative sans aucun jugement et certaines autres dont les condamnations à la peine capitale n'étaient pas devenues définitives, n'ont pas bénéficié de l'amnistie. De même on retient encore en prison nombre d'Arméniens sous prétexte que les délits dont ils sont accusés ou pour lesquels ils ont été déjà condamnés ne sont pas d'ordre politique.

Les démarches du Patriarcat en faveur de ces personnes dont le nombre dépasse quelques centaines, sont restées sans effet.

2. Les Vicaires diocésains de Bitlis, de Trébizonde, et de Arabkir qui avaient été condamnés à mort par les Tribunaux de province sans observation des formalités requises suivant les immunités ecclésiastiques, au lieu d'être remis, d'après l'entente intervenue, au Patriarcat, sont maintenant acheminés vers Tripoli de Barbarie.

3. Malgré les promesses faites, les Administrations et les fabriques de l'Etat n'ont pas encore repris à leur service les employés Arméniens quelles avaient renvoyés lors des derniers événements sans aucun motif. Et cependant plusieurs d'entre eux avaient même mérité des pensions de retraite à raison de leur nombre d'années de services loyaux.

4. Il avait été ordonné par Iradé Impérial d'ajourner pour deux ans la perception de l'impôt d'exonération militaire dans les provinces qui ont été sujettes aux derniers malheureux événements. Or, on y continue avec rigueur à poursuivre le recouvrement du dit impôt sous prétexte que l'ajournement ne peut concerner que les années arriérées et non l'impôt des années courantes et l'on ne tient même pas compte des tués et des disparus puisqu'on exige des survivants la part d'impôt des autres sur la base des chiffres et des registres des années précédentes.

5. Un Iradé Impérial avait prescrit de donner £T. 2,000 de secours aux Arméniens éprouvés et de leur distribuer les céréales nécessaires par les greniers de l'Etat. Or, non seulement rien n'a été fait de ce chef, mais encore, nonobstant les démarches itératives du Patriarcat, le Ministère des Finances n'a pas encore payé les arriérés des subventions de quelques années dues au Patriarcat et à l'hôpital Arménien.

6. A l'effet de recueillir quelques fonds de secours et de les faire parvenir aux milliers de nécessiteux mourant de misère et de froid dans les provinces, le Patriarcat a voulu, se conformant aux nombreux précédents acquis, instituer dans son sein une Commission de Secours, faire appel à la charité publique et mériter en cela l'aide et la protection du Gouvernement Impérial. Contre toute attente, des entraves ont été mises à la réalisation de ce projet utile et indispensable.

7. Contrairement à l'Iradé Impérial proclamant la liberté de conscience, les autorités dans les provinces empêchent et soulèvent bien des difficultés aux personnes qui, sous la terreur des événements, avaient fait semblant d'embrasser l'Islamisme et qui, maintenant, veulent exercer leur religion Chrétienne. De même elles ne facilitent guère le retour à leur foyer des femmes et des filles enlevées de force à leurs familles.

8. La Porte n'a pas donné suite, jusqu'à l'heure qu'il est, aux instances réitérées du Patriarcat, d'emmener d'Adana à Constantinople le pseudo-Catholicos Ohannes Kazandjiar qui, profitant de certaines circonstances, a usurpé ce titre contrairement aux lois canoniques et provoque des perturbations dans la province.

9. L'autorité a empêché de remettre au couvent Arménien de Jérusalem et au siège de Cilicie les biens laissés par feu le Catholicos de Sis. Les démarches du Patriarcat basées sur des privilèges et les précédents acquis, sont demeurées sans résultat.

10. L'Administration Militaire a mis la main sur le cimetière Arménien de Tarsous, dans le Vilayet d'Adana, sous prétexte qu'il est entouré de fortes murailles. L'offre d'abattre ces murailles, qui consistent en quelques rochers naturels, n'a pas été acceptée.

11. La Sublime Porte transmet aux autorités provinciales les plaintes du Patriarcat relatives aux agissements et aux procédés des fonctionnaires malveillants, mais celles-ci ne font que contester systématiquement le bien fondé des réclamations

en sorte que les abus continuent et il devient presque impossible d'obtenir l'amélioration désirée.

Le Patriarche conclut à la fin que si l'aide et l'assistance du Gouvernement Impérial lui faisaient défaut dans l'exercice de ses fonctions pour aplanir les difficultés, il ne saurait comment se rendre utile à l'Etat et à la nation.

Le 9 Mars, 1897.

No. 210.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 179.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, March 18, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 155 of the 11th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consular officers respecting further movements of Turkish troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 210.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 17.)
Sir,

Angora, March 5, 1897.

IN addition to the movements of troops referred to in my despatch No. 16 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report to your Excellency the following further departures of Reserves and transport horses from this vilayet, viz.:—

1. On the 1st instant from Angora of forty transport horses with fifteen drivers.

2. Of the Mihalidj (Angora Sandjak) battalion, numbering 750 men from the Sarikeui station, by special train on the same date, and yesterday, the 2nd instant, of 1,300 men of the Haimana and Sivri Hissar (Angora Sandjak) battalions, also from the Sarikeui station. The remaining 200 men of the latter battalions are, I understand, to leave to-day in charge of the transport animals, some 175 in number. The total, therefore, of Reserves sent from this vilayet, with those reported in my despatch No. 16 above referred to, now stands at 7,191.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 210.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 19.)
Sir,

Angora, March 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, since my despatch No. 18 of the 4th March last, the following battalions of Reserves have left Angora for Ismidt, viz.:—

1. The Denek Maden (Kirshehir Sandjak) battalion, 750 strong with 175 transport horses, on the 6th instant.

2. The Soungourli (Tchorum Sandjak) battalion, 650 strong with 110 transport horses, on the 7th instant; and later on in the same day the Kirshehir battalion, 750 strong, with 200 horses, of which 128 transport and the remainder cavalry mounts. The above, together with those reported in my despatch No. 18 above referred to, now bring the total number of departures from this vilayet up to 10,401.

I may add that those of the Reserves who have come under my own personal notice appear to have been strong and in good health. The Kirshehir battalion in particular, I am told, enjoys a reputation for fighting efficiency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

P.S.—In my despatch No. 18, reporting the departure on the 3rd instant of the Yabanabad battalion, I omitted to state that they were accompanied by the General of Brigade, Ahmed Pasha, hitherto Resident at Angora.

H. S. S.

Inclosure 3 in No. 210.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 20.)
Sir,

Angora, March 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Keun, reporting the mobilization of reserves in the Konieh Vilayet.

Your Excellency will observe that in the Konieh Vilayet proper, three battalions only are being mobilized, and that at the date of Mr. Keun's despatch orders for their departure had not been received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 210.

Vice-Consul Keun to Consul Shipley.

(No. 15.)
Sir,

Konieh, March 2, 1897.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 8 I beg to state that the military authorities are to have ready equipped the battalions of Ak-Serai, Silea, and Kotch-Hissar to take the train for Constantinople immediately they will receive the telegraphic order.

Three battalions of Selefkia Anamour and Alaya are expected to reach Konieh on the 5th instant, whence they will be sent by rail to Constantinople.

The Military Commander of Konieh, Achmet Rassim Pasha, died lately in the capital, and it is rumoured that the General Commanding at Sparta will be appointed in his stead.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. A. KEUN.

Inclosure 5 in No. 210.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 21.)
Sir,

Angora, March 9, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 20 of yesterday's date, inclosing a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Keun on the subject of the mobilization of Reserves in the Konieh Vilayet, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that Mr. Keun now informs me that the battalions under mobilization in his vilayet are not, as he at first stated, those of Ak-Serai, Silea, and Kotch-Hissar, but those of Ermenek, Elmali, and Kilindrin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 211.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 180. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 18, 1897.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs called upon me yesterday afternoon, and stated that he had just left Yildiz, where he had had a long private audience of the Sultan.

His Majesty had spoken to him about the reforms, and had asked him to account for the delay in their presentation. Tewfik Pasha replied that this might be owing to the Powers being not yet come to an agreement on all points, or that they might be waiting for an opportune moment, and for the termination of the present phase of the Cretan question.

His Majesty then asked his Minister if he could tell him what the reforms consisted of. His Excellency replied that he had no precise information, but that he had reason to believe that there was nothing in them detrimental to the interests of the Sultan or of his Empire.

"If that is so," said His Majesty, "what reason can there be for this unaccountable delay in communicating proposals which might be adopted at once."

Tewfik Pasha stated that he then spoke to the Sultan quite openly as to the mischief caused by the Palace *entourage*. "Truth," he said, "never enters these doors, and your Majesty is surrounded by people who deceive you." The Sultan asked him to name the persons who were guilty in this respect, but he declined to single out any individuals. His Majesty asked whether this opinion was shared by others, to which Tewfik Pasha replied in the affirmative, and added that the Ambassadors were as well acquainted as himself with the state of affairs.

Although his Excellency did not say that he came to see me by the Sultan's orders, it was evident that he had been sent the round of the Embassies to see what he could pick up. I said that although owing to the critical state of affairs the presentation of the reforms had been delayed, it must not be supposed that the Powers had in any way modified their intentions with regard to them. As soon as the right moment came they would be presented, not for discussion, but for prompt execution. I was not at liberty to say what they consisted of, but I could assure him that there was nothing in them that would not be for the advantage of the Empire and of the Sultan if he understood his true interests, although it was evident that His Majesty's subjects could not be secured from the abuses and illegalities from which they suffered without some restriction being placed on the arbitrary acts of the Palace. It might also be taken for granted that proposals which had received the assent of the Six Governments could not be of a nature to promote the selfish interests of any one Power to the detriment of Turkey.

Tewfik Pasha, who has passed many years in the Diplomatic Service, and who left the post of Ambassador at Berlin to become Foreign Minister, appears to be as firmly convinced as other Turks of the better class that his country can only be saved by the interference of the Treaty Powers with the arbitrary rule of the Palace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 212.

Mr. Howard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 21.)
My Lord, *The Hague, March 20, 1897.*

A NOTICE to the following effect has appeared in the "Dagblad" of the Hague, at the request, it is said, of the Turkish Legation here:—

"In compliance with a Circular despatch of the 11th instant from the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs, those whom it concerns are notified that Armenians who left during the late troubles, and who are at present abroad, are included in the recently proclaimed amnesty. Armenians who have been condemned to death are to be confined provisionally in a fortified place."

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY HOWARD.

No. 212*.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 213.)
(Extract.) *Paris, March 21, 1897.*

M. HANOTAUX is greatly concerned at the prospect of troubles recommencing in Asiatic Turkey, as indicated by recent incidents reported from Sivas.

He is of opinion that pressure should be exercised upon Turkey as much as upon Greece to keep the peace both in Europe and Asia.

He is also of opinion that the introduction of the reforms should be urged upon the Sultan without delay.

No. 213.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 144.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 22, 1897.*

BRITISH Vice-Consul at Sivas reports that at least 100 persons were killed at Tokat, the pillaging was general, and the massacre lasted eight hours.

No. 214.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 145.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 22, 1897, 12·15 P.M.*

THE news respecting Tokat which I telegraphed to your Lordship in my telegram No. 144 is confirmed by a telegram sent indirectly from that place on Saturday afternoon by the native agent of an English firm. This telegram says: "We are alive; our property also without loss." It is generally believed here that slaughter and pillage, lasting eight hours, would not have been possible without the sanction of the Palace, and the prompt receipt of the above telegram shows that the line was open, and that there was nothing to prevent communications passing.

I have sent my first Dragoman to speak to the Foreign Minister, and the Ambassadors will make joint representations later, but if we are to prevent a renewal of last year's massacres, some clear and definite communication from the Powers will be necessary.

No. 215.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 22.)

(No. 149.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Constantinople, March 22, 1897, 9·30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING are copies of telegrams communicated to me by Sublime Porte:

1. *March 19. To Authorities of Sivas.*

"Je vous recommande formellement de découvrir, coûte que coûte, les auteurs de l'incident de Tokat, de les punir avec toute la rigueur des lois et d'aviser d'une façon sérieuse à l'adoption des mesures propres à prévenir le renouvellement de faits aussi regrettables.

"Tous les fonctionnaires civils et les autorités de la police devront veiller avec la plus grande vigilance pour empêcher le plus petit motif de nature à provoquer de pareils incidents et seront tenus responsables et punis de toute négligence dans l'accomplissement de cette tâche."

2, *March* 20. *To Authorities of Sivas.*

"Je vous préviens que les Chrétiens de Sivas, effrayés par suite de l'incident de Tokat, appréhendent des troubles. Nous tenons à cœur à ce que vous convoquiez les Ulémas et les Notables pour leur faire les recommandations efficaces propres à faire revenir le calme dans les esprits et à engager tout le monde à vaquer paisiblement à ses affaires. Vous aurez aussi à assurer le maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité en faisant circuler dans la ville jour et nuit des patrouilles. Si, Dieu nous en garde, quelque désordre venait à surgir, il est décidé que vous en serez tenu responsable."

3, *March* 20. *Circular to Provincial Authorities.*

"D'après certains indices, des gens malveillants auraient une intention de susciter par toute sorte de moyens sur différents points de l'Empire des troubles afin d'augmenter l'embarras dans lequel se trouve en ce moment le Gouvernement Impérial, par suite des affaires de Crète et de Grèce, et de provoquer une intervention des Puissances Européennes, en égard à la gravité des circonstances, tout incident qui viendrait à se produire et donnerait lieu à une intervention étrangère serait de nature à créer au Gouvernement Impérial les plus grandes difficultés. Vous devez donc ne pas perdre un seul instant de vue l'importance de la situation présente et de la position où nous nous trouvons, et veiller jour et nuit à ce qu'aucun fait ou acte pouvant motiver des incidents quels qu'ils soient entre Musulmans et Chrétiens ne puisse se produire. Vous aurez aussi à faire des recommandations efficaces aux Chefs des Communautés pour que toutes les classes de la population aient à respecter les droits de chacun. Je crois devoir vous prévenir qu'il a été décidé de sévir rigoureusement contre tous les fonctionnaires civils et de la police qui par leur négligence auraient laissé se produire des incidents ou n'auraient pas fait leur devoir pour les réprimer."

No. 216.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 22, 1897, 10 P.M.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegrams Nos. 144 and 147 of this day's date respecting the massacre at Tokat.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs has already expressed himself strongly as to the result of any further massacres; and I will now ascertain whether he is prepared to take the initiative in proposing a joint communication to the Porte from the Great Powers.

No. 217.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

(No. 132.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 22, 1897, 10 P.M.

MASSACRE at Tokat.

You should communicate the telegrams Nos. 144 and 145 from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, which have been repeated to you, to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, and ask his Excellency whether the French Government is disposed to take the initiative in suggesting a collective representation of the most earnest character on the part of the Powers, warning the Porte that effective precautions are necessary to prevent any further occurrences of a similar nature, the repetition of which at the present juncture would entail the most serious consequences for the Ottoman Empire.

A proposal of this nature would be warmly supported by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 218.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 76.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, March* 23, 1897, 1·35 P.M.

MASSACRE at Tokat.

The French Representatives to the Great Powers had already been informed last night by telegraph that M. Hanotaux had instructed the French Ambassador at Constantinople to consult with his colleagues as to the measures to be taken in the sense indicated in your Lordship's telegram No. 132. A demand for the dismissal of the Vali of Sivas was suggested by his Excellency.

The proposed Commission of Inquiry on the spot is merely a device of the Porte for the purpose of gaining time, and the energetic action of the Powers in stopping this recommencement of massacres, must not be allowed to be hindered by such suggestions, or disorders will infallibly spread.

No. 219.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 151.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 23, 1897, 2·40 P.M.

MURDER of Relief Agent.

My telegram No. 137 of the 20th March.

Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis has telegraphed to me as follows:—

"I have received Embassy telegram of the 20th March.

"The Mutessarif of Siirt telegraphed to the Vali yesterday that no more money had been found; the accounts are being examined by the Relief Commission at Siirt in order to ascertain how much money the deceased ought to have had, but no report has yet been received.

"The Vali has twice sent telegraphic orders to have the report forwarded by telegraph as soon as it is ready, and he has also inquired about a remittance of money through the post, said to have been received by the Agent shortly before his murder."

No. 220.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 152.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 23, 1897.

THE Ambassadors have just been informed of the appointment of a Commission to proceed to Tokat. The President will be Hassan Fehmi Pasha. The Foreign Minister who brought this information has presented a report to the Council of Ministers, who are now in session at the Palace.

In confidence Tewfik Pasha observed to me that he had little hope that his recommendations would be acted upon, that it was only to gain time that the Commission had been appointed, and that it would not be permitted to do anything.

In his report, his Excellency had recommended the immediate suspension of the officials responsible for the massacre, in order to show authorities in other places that such offences are no longer to remain unpunished, and as the only way to satisfy European public opinion.

No. 221.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 24.)

(No. 155.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 24, 1897, 10·30 A.M.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 140, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have been told by Tewfik Pasha that the dismissal of the Vali of Adana was decided upon last night by the Council of Ministers.

No. 222.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 24, 4 P.M.)

(No. 156.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Pera, March* 24, 1897, 1·20 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Sivas Consul to-day:—

"Mutessarif of Tokat is Mahmoud Nazim Pasha, the Military Commandant Hakki Pasha, the Chief of Police Yacoub Effendi, the Chief of Gendarmerie Husui Effendi, the President of Municipality Ladif Oglou Kour Hadji. The fact that the massacre lasted eight hours proves it was organized. There are 500 soldiers at Tokat. I am informed they took part, but even if this is not true they were sufficient to check disorder if it had been desired."

No. 223.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 24, 4·15 P.M.)

(No. 157.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Constantinople, March* 24, 1897, 3·50 P.M.

MY telegram No. 155.

Foreign Minister informs me Vali of Adana is dismissed and successor appointed.

No. 224.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March* 24, 1897, 4·15 P.M.

I HAVE received with satisfaction your telegrams Nos. 154 and 155 of the 23rd and 24th instant, reporting the success of your efforts to obtain orders for the arrest of the authorities responsible for the massacre at Tokat, as well as the dismissal of the Vali of Adana.

No. 225.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 24, 11·15 P.M.)

(No. 158.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Constantinople, March* 24, 1897, 4·10 P.M.

THE following is a list of members of Commission which starts to-day for Tokat:—

Hassan Fehmi Pasha, Director of Indirect Contributions, President; other members are Chevoki Bey, President of Court of Cassation; Djelal Bey, President of Court of Appeal; Yanka Effendi Vithynos, former Councillor of Crete; Dilber Effendi, member of the Reform Commission; Malik Effendi, and a General of Division.

No. 226.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 25.)

(No. 226.)
My Lord, *Paris, March* 24, 1897.

AT the commencement of my interview with M. Hanotaux this afternoon, I communicated to his Excellency the substance of Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 146, respecting the action taken by himself and his colleagues at Constantinople in view of the massacres at Tokat.

M. Hanotaux thereupon read to me the telegram which he had received from M. Cambon, announcing the dismissal of the Turkish officials compromised; and said that the promptness of the result of the Ambassadors' action was very satisfactory.

On my return to the Embassy I found your Lordship's telegram No. 135 containing the same information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 227.

Anthopoulo Pasha to Foreign Office.—(*Received March* 25.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de Turquie présente ses compliments à Sir Thomas Sanderson, et s'empresse de lui envoyer sous ce pli la copie de la dépêche dont il a eu l'honneur de lui donner lecture hier au Foreign Office.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 25 Mars. 1897.

Inclosure in No. 227.

Tewfik Pasha to Anthopoulo Pasha.

VENDREDI dernier, au matin, une rixe ayant éclaté entre quelques vagabonds Musulmans et Arméniens à Tokat, rixe pendant laquelle il y eut des morts et blessés de part et d'autre, la troupe et la gendarmerie intervinrent et séparèrent les combattants, arrêtèrent les promoteurs et provocateurs, mirent fin à la bagarre et rétablirent ainsi l'ordre et la tranquillité.

Aussitôt informée de ce regrettable incident, Sa Majesté Impériale, notre auguste Maître, a fait transmettre au Vali de la province l'ordre de se rendre à Tokat pour punir avec toute la rigueur des lois, les coupables tant Musulmans qu'Arméniens, tout en faisant savoir aux autorités provinciales que dans le cas où, soit à Tokat, soit sur d'autres localités de l'Anatolie, des incidents même peu importants viendraient à se produire et où les habitants chercheraient à exercer l'office de la police, ou à lui prêter main forte, de même que si une classe de la population attaquerait l'autre et ferait usage d'armes, tous les fonctionnaires responsables, grands et petits, seraient passibles des punitions les plus sévères. D'autres mesures encore avaient été aussi adoptées dans le même but.

Le Vali nous télégraphie aujourd'hui que les autorités locales avaient fait leur possible pour empêcher les désordres, que les Ulémas et Notables de la ville avaient déployé tous leurs efforts pour mettre fin à l'incident, que toutes les dispositions nécessaires ont été prises pour prévenir le renouvellement de pareils faits, que l'ordre a été partout rétabli et qu'une enquête préliminaire a été ouverte contre les prévenus, qui ont été déjà arrêtés.

Comme je l'ai dit plus haut, plusieurs individus ayant été tués ou blessés pendant cette échauffourée il faudra décider qu'un tribunal extraordinaire ayant pouvoir de juger en dernier ressort, composé de six membres et placé sous la présidence de son Excellence Hassan Fehmi Pacha, Directeur-Général des Contributions Indirectes, partirait demain à destination de Tokat pour effectuer en toute équité et impartialité une enquête minutieuse et condamner les fauteurs et instigateurs de ces désordres. Cette enquête devra mettre au jour en détail les motifs qui ont provoqué l'incident. Les prévenus subiront des interrogatoires par les soins de Juges d'Instruction et, après avoir été jugés, seront passibles des peines édictées par les lois.

Le maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité étant un des premiers devoirs des autorités et des Iradés Itératifs de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan ayant prescrit la punition sévère de tous les fonctionnaires grands et petits qui auraient fait preuve de négligence dans l'accomplissement de leur devoir, tous les employés et agents responsables dont la négligence ou la culpabilité seraient établies seront jugés conformément aux instructions dont le tribunal extraordinaire susmentionné a été muni. A la suite de l'incident, le Gouverneur de Tokat, Mahmoud Nazim Pacha, le Commandant de la Gendarmerie, et le Chef Commissaire de Police ont été destitués et soumis à un interrogatoire et tous ceux qui ont participé aux désordres arrêtés et emprisonnés. Le Vali a reçu en outre l'ordre télégraphique de commencer immédiatement les interrogatoires des inculpés afin que les procès-verbaux puissent en être remis au tribunal extraordinaire dès son arrivée sur les lieux.

Tel étant la réalité des faits, je vous prie d'en faire part, sans perte de temps, à M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Gouvernement près duquel vous êtes accrédité, pour le mettre sur ses gardes contre toute version contraire, en donnant à son

Excellence des assurances formelles sur les fermes dispositions du Gouvernement Impérial et sa volonté bien arrêtée d'infliger une punition sommaire et exemplaire aux coupables.

(Signé) TEWFIK.

No. 225.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 167.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 25, 1897, 9·35 P.M.*

WITH reference to the private telegram of the Under-Secretary of State of the 22nd March as to Eghin:

I have made representations to the Porte.

General orders had already been telegraphed, and to-day special instructions were sent confirming them.

No. 229.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 167 A.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 25, 1897.*

I HAVE just received the following telegram from Major Bulman:—

"The situation at Sivas is very critical; there is proof that a massacre was being prepared. The appointment of Special Tribunal is believed to be merely a comedy, and has not created a good effect.

"The Vali should be ordered to execute the rioters immediately; otherwise I believe the disorders will spread.

"The Commissioner of Police, Mehemed Bey, and the President of the Municipality, Nouri Bey, are said to be stirring up the Mussulmans. I request that they be removed from Sivas.

"I have heard uncertain rumours of disorders at Erbaa; but since soldiers have been sent there I believe them to be true."

No. 230.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 168.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 25, 1897, 9·45 P.M.*

WE have agreed to insist on the arrest and dismissal of the Military Commandant of Tokat, since the reports of Major Bulman and the French Vice-Consul represent him as at least as culpable as the other officials, and to draw attention to the conduct of the two officials mentioned by Major Bulman in his telegram of the 25th March.

No. 231.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 119.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, March 26, 1897, 2·10 P.M.*

IN accordance with the opinion expressed in your Excellency's telegram No. 131 of the 20th instant, orders have been sent to Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" to proceed to Mersina. She will arrange with the Vice-Consul the date of her arrival, and will convey him along the coast.

No. 232.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 26, 9·30 P.M.)

(No. 171.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, March 26, 1897.*

APPOINTMENT of Bekir Pasha, Mutessarif of Sinope, to be Mutessarif of Tokat, in the place of the dismissed Governor, is officially notified this morning.

No. 233.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 26.)

(No 172.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March 26, 1897.*

MAJOR BULMAN learns that 400 Armenians were killed at Tokat. He will arrive there on Sunday.

No. 234.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 191.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 22, 1897.*

IN my despatch No. 140 of the 4th instant, I had the honour to inform your Lordship that the Council of Ministers had submitted a proposal to the Palace that Mazhar Bey should be condemned administratively to imprisonment in a fortress for life, together with degradation to the ranks.

I now learn from the French Embassy that the Imperial Iradé sanctioning this proposal has been communicated to the Sublime Porte, and that a fortress in the Hedjaz has been named as the place of his imprisonment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 235.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 192.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 22, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 152 of the 10th instant respecting the trial of Réshid Bey, Mudir of Barwarah, for ill-treatment of the Nestorian Christians, I have now the honour to report that the Minister of the Interior has sent telegraphic orders to the Vali of Mosul for the dismissal of the official in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 236.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 197. Confidential.)

Pera, March 24, 1897.

My Lord,

AS I reported in my despatch No. 74 of the 3rd February, the Armenian Patriarch dispatched an emissary to visit the head-quarters of the Armenian Revolutionary Societies in London, Paris, and Geneva.

I have been confidentially furnished with a copy of a Report addressed to Artin Pasha by the Agent in question, which has been laid before the Sultan with a view of impressing upon him the danger which exists of fresh outbreaks, and so inducing him to make the concessions which the Patriarch and Artin Pasha have been endeavouring to obtain for the Armenians.

It appears from this Report that the Hintchagists are not likely to take any action at present, but that the Trochagists, who are mainly recruited from the Armenians of the Caucasus, are determined to make another attempt of the same nature as that of last August.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 236.

Memorandum.

CI-JOINT le Rapport que M. ——, qui était chargé par le Patriarche Arménien et par Artin Pacha de se rendre en Europe auprès des révolutionnaires Arméniens, vient d'adresser à son retour à Constantinople au Pacha. Le passage le plus significatif dans cette pièce est celui qui mentionne la volte-face de la partie la plus influente de ces Comités, c'est-à-dire des Trochagistes, vers la politique Russe. La traduction de cette pièce a été soumise à Sa Majesté le Sultan afin que Sa Majesté soit bien pénétré encore une fois de l'idée que le danger de nouveaux désordres est imminent, d'autant plus qu'aucune amélioration n'a été faite jusqu'ici au sort des Arméniens.

Le 21 Mars, 1897.

Inclosure 2 in No. 236.

Report addressed by M. V. Agénian to Artin Pasha.

DE retour de cette tournée en Europe dont votre Excellence avait bien voulu me charger, j'ai l'honneur de lui soumettre les renseignements que j'ai pu recueillir et les communications que j'ai eues en votre nom et muni de la Circulaire Patriarcale, avec les Comités révolutionaires Arméniens établis en Europe. Ceux-ci se divisent actuellement en trois partis; j'ai dû les voir séparément.

D'abord à Paris et à Londres je suis allé m'entretenir avec les deux divisions de Hentchaguistes, dont l'une a pour chef Nazar Beg, et l'autre Arpiar. Ces deux derniers partis paraissent présentement être assez faibles et l'on croit qu'ils ne sont pas en état de pouvoir faire des coups de tête et ce malgré le désir qu'ils ont et l'activité qu'ils déploient. Quant aux Trochaguistes, composés en majeure partie de sujets Russes, ils sont considérés comme disposant de beaucoup de forces et prêts à toute aventure.

A Londres Nazar Beg, chef reconnu d'une des divisions Hentchague, étant sérieusement malade, c'est sa femme qui le remplace pour le moment comme chef de parti, parlant et agissant toujours au nom de son mari; l'on prétend même qu'elle a été toujours le véritable meneur et que son mari n'était que son instrument; aussi elle a pris présentement en mains la direction effective du Comité; elle avait, dit-on, une certaine fortune qu'elle a mise à la disposition de l'affaire et tous les acolytes de son parti trouvent gîte et nourriture chez elle; aussi chaque fois que j'ai été la voir pour l'amener à des idées saines, j'ai vu dans leur maison et causé avec plusieurs jeunes gens exaltés possédant à fond l'histoire de toutes les révolutions de ces derniers temps, ce qui démontre qu'on leur fait apprendre tout ce qu'il faut concernant les menées Anarchistes et qu'on les prépare comme des fauteurs pouvant agir à un mot d'ordre des Comités. Dans une longue conversation que j'ai eu avec la femme du dit Nazar Beg, elle m'a fait entendre que tant que les Arméniens n'obtiendraient pas satisfaction réelle, les Comités ne pouvaient cesser de maintenir le pays dans un état de trouble, état dont la stagnation sans résultat est en attendant une cause d'affaiblissement pour eux.

Elle m'a dit que depuis la visite de Diran Bey six mois se sont déjà écoulés et malgré ses assurances rien n'a été exécuté et depuis le temps où il a dû calmer l'exaspération par les promesses de son père l'état de la nation devient de jour en jour plus déplorable, vu que s'il n'y a pas eu de massacre en grand, les maux dont les Arméniens souffrent les abîment périodiquement. Elle m'a laissé entendre sans toutefois préciser, que tout de même jusqu'au printemps la nation Arménienne et le parti conservateur ont tout le temps et la tranquillité nécessaires pour arriver dans la mesure voulue à obtenir l'amélioration de cette situation.

A Paris le représentant du parti Hentchaguiste m'avait dit aussi que l'intérêt même du Gouvernement Impérial exigeait de faire les réformes nécessaires en Anatolie, d'octroyer à la nation Arménienne le bien-être, l'égalité, et surtout la justice nécessaires pour qu'elle puisse se remettre, s'organiser, se renforcer, et tout en restant comme toujours fidèle sujette de Sa Majesté, devenir plutôt un élément de force entre les mains du Gouvernement et une contrebalance vis-à-vis de ses ennemis dans les circonstances difficiles présentes, tandis que l'état actuel des choses ne pouvant pas être toléré indéfiniment, les révolutionnaires seraient forcés de faire une démonstration au moment propice afin de se libérer d'un joug qui détruit successivement leur propre nation.

Arpiar m'a paru un peu plus modéré tout en émettant les mêmes opinions que les précédentes, tandis que ses subordonnés étaient très excités et traitaient de folie toute espérance de la nation fondée sur le bon vouloir du Gouvernement Impérial, et ils croient fermement que le seul remède réside dans une nouvelle démonstration plus considérable pour arriver à une solution. L'opinion générale en Europe est que ces deux partis Hentchaguistes sont actuellement affaiblis par les récentes désordres qui ont amené leur division en deux camps, et qu'ils ne sont pas capables, malgré toute leur volonté, de monter des coups surtout dans la capitale, où ils ont tout de même leurs agents.

Il ne reste donc que les Trochaguistes comme élément révolutionnaire assez sérieux et ayant les moyens pour pouvoir organiser et exécuter des démonstrations tant à Constantinople que dans les provinces. Ce parti a adopté le système de décentralisation, ses principaux centres se trouvant à Genève, Tiflis, Constantinople, et dans divers chefs-lieux des provinces d'Anatolie, tandis qu'ils ont des représentants dans les grandes capitales de l'Europe, formant des centres secondaires.

La rédaction du journal Trochague, organe officiel de ce parti, se trouve installé à Genève et sert d'intermédiaire entre les divers centres, ces derniers ne pouvant pas se mettre facilement en communication directe l'un avec l'autre. A Genève, où je me suis rendu, j'ai eu un long entretien à la rédaction même du dit journal, avec ses individus, entre autres le jeune chef de la bande qui a envahi dernièrement la Banque Ottomane, ainsi qu'avec le chef du centre de Paris. Ces chefs très au courant de la politique Européenne et surtout de tout ce qui se passe en Anatolie, évoquent l'état de misère de la nation et critiquent la manière d'agir de Sa Bentitude le Patriarche qu'ils ne trouvent pas du tout ce qu'il devait être, manquant d'énergie et n'ayant aucun succès depuis son élection.

Ils trouvent qu'il n'a pu remédier jusqu'ici en aucune façon à l'état de tant de pauvres gens si éprouvés, sans habitations, sans nourriture, s'anéantissant de jour en jour et arrivor à faire exécuter les promesses qui ont été données ces derniers temps, ils concluent que puisque d'une façon ou d'une autre la nation est placée sur une pente de destruction d'où elle ne peut se délivrer ni par la conciliation ni par l'attente, ils préfèrent tenter tout pour organiser une révolte générale en jouant le tout pour le tout, provoquer une nouvelle effusion de sang des Chrétiens et en compromettant d'une manière sérieuse les intérêts des Puissances, forcer la main à ces derniers d'intervenir en faveur de la nation.

Les Arméniens d'après eux ne pouvant se laisser sacrifier, doivent faire tout leur possible pour changer sous n'importe quelle forme, leur état actuel, voir même passer aux Russes.

Ils prétendent d'ailleurs que la Russie tient prête sur la frontière une armée de 30,000 à 40,000 hommes tout prêts à envahir les provinces habitées par les Arméniens; et à mon objection que le passage de notre communauté sous la domination Russe serait notre perte et que cette idée est depuis des siècles invétérée dans l'esprit de tous les Arméniens, ils m'ont répondu qu'il valait mieux être Russe plutôt que de se laisser détruire. On voit par là que l'inspiration étrangère est pour beaucoup dans ces nouvelles dispositions d'esprit chez les révolutionnaires, qui en passant chez les Russes croient obtenir au moins la tranquillité, la justice, et surtout la vie sauve.

Aux conseils de prudence et de tranquillité que je leur prodiguais au nom de votre Excellence, ils m'ont dit ne pouvoir me répondre au nom de tous les Trochuguistes à cause de la décentralisation, mais qu'ils leur soumettraient les conseils dont j'étais chargé et que dans tous les cas ils pensaient qu'à moins d'un cas imprévu ils espéraient ne pas être obligés de faire une démonstration jusqu'au printemps, comptant beaucoup sur le projet de réformes élaboré par les Puissances, qui serait soumis au Gouvernement Impérial et qui est leur dernier espoir; mais que si cela aussi n'aboutissait à rien, ils étaient décidés et tout prêts de s'unir aux menées Grecs, Macédoniens, et autres, afin de ne pas perdre l'occasion et de ne pas laisser de nouveau les affaires Arméniennes reléguées à l'arrière-plan. Ils prétendent qu'ayant déjà perdu plus de 150,000 hommes ils préfèrent en perdre encore plus du double et sauver définitivement le reste.

Ils m'ont chargé de communiquer à votre Excellence que s'ils vous avaient écouté depuis six mois et que le résultat des convictions et promesses de votre Excellence était nul jusqu'aujourd'hui, c'est que ou votre Excellence se laissait tromper ou qu'elle voulait les tromper; qu'alors ils regrettaient de ne pouvoir plus prêter oreille à vos exhortations et qu'ils se réservaient leur liberté d'action sans vouloir la subordonner à de vaines espérances prodiguées par votre Excellence et le parti pacifique de la nation depuis les derniers événements.

Ils insistent surtout que c'est la réalisation des intentions généreuses de notre auguste Souverain qui pourrait mettre un terme à tout conflit préjudiciable et aux intérêts de l'Empire et à ceux de tous les Arméniens.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

Constantinople, le 5 (17) *Mars*, 1897.

No. 237.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 29.)

(No. 198.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 24, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 127 of the 15th February, 1896, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, reporting the number of Druse prisoners there, and the declaration of a general amnesty in favour of the Hauran Druses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 237.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.)

Sir, *Damascus, March* 10, 1897.

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Eyres' despatch No. 6 of the 1st February, 1896, reporting the arrest and deportation to Crete of some 300 Druses, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that thirty-six of these men are now in prison here in the Kala'a (fortress), two having been tried and convicted, while the remaining thirty-four are still awaiting trial, their places of origin being as follows:—

Eighteen from Mejdel Shems, of whom one, Abou Ali Beshir, has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment, the length of which I have not been able to ascertain, while the rest are awaiting trial.

Four from Sehita, of whom one, Abou Muzyad, has been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, while the rest are awaiting trial.

Three from Hadir
Four from Ain Siaára } Awaiting trial.
Seven from Eurneh

In addition to these thirty-six men, there were also at one time in the Kala'a eight other Druses from the villages of Kala'at, Jindal, and Durbul, who have, however, recently been removed to the prison in Katana, a small town lying about 15 miles to the south of Damascus, the seat of Government of the Wadi-el-Ajem Caza.

Besides the thirty-six men above mentioned, there are, I am informed on good authority, forty other Druses still confined in the Kala'a. It would appear that these men, who are from the Lebanon, were arrested during the summer of last year while on their way back from the Hauran to their native country. They are accused—whether rightfully or wrongfully I cannot say—of having gone to the assistance of the insurgents.

Although it is generally reported here that the Government have abandoned their intention of enforcing conscription on the Druses and Moslems of the Hauran, I was informed yesterday by the Mushir, Abdullah Pasha, that this is not the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 237.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 14.)

Sir, *Damascus, March* 17, 1897.

WITH reference to my telegram of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency a translation of a public notice contained in the last issue of the "Syria" newspaper, in which a general amnesty is proclaimed in favour of the Druses of the Hauran. On my inquiring of the Acting Vali whether the Proclamation had been actually communicated to the people whom it concerns, he assured me that this step had been taken.

I should state that, although the newspaper from which the extract is taken is supposed to have been published on the 11th instant, as a matter of fact it did not reach my hands until the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 237.

Extract from the "Syria" of March 11, 1897.

(Translation.)

THE public is hereby informed that, whereas certain Druses, who, on the termination of the Hauran incident, found themselves homeless and leading a wandering life, entreated the Imperial authorities to be allowed to return to their homes on condition of their making submission to the Government, and complying with all its orders as regards taxation, &c., a telegraphic order was recently received by the vilayet from the Grand Vizierate, to the effect that His Imperial Majesty the Sultan has been graciously pleased to approve of a decision arrived at by the Ministers sitting in special conclave, to the effect that a general amnesty be proclaimed in favour of all the Druses of the Jebel Druse in order that they may return to their homes, and while being careful to comply with all the demands of the Government in the matter of taxation, to occupy themselves with their agricultural and commercial pursuits.

An order in this sense has been sent by the vilayet to the Mutessarif of the Hauran.

No. 238.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 199.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 940 of the 15th December, 1895, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus respecting the calling out of a small number of Redifs in the district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 238.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Damascus, March 18, 1897.*

WITH reference to the last paragraph but one in Mr. Consul Eyre's despatch No. 53 of the 4th December, 1895, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that of the Redifs belonging to the years 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, and 1896, those of them who deserted on the occasion mentioned in the despatch under reference have been called out during the last few days. I hear from a reliable source that, although these men should number about 1,200, the military authorities do not expect to get together more than 800—say, a battalion.

It is generally supposed—with what amount of truth I cannot say—that the calling out of so small a number of Reserves is really a "ballon d'essai" on the part of the Turkish War Office with a view to ascertaining how the public accepts the idea of a calling out of the Reserves; and that if there seems no likelihood of a serious disturbance among Moslems liable to military service as Redifs the whole of the latter will very shortly be called out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

P.S.—I should state that of the 1,200 Redifs mentioned above about ninety are Ihtiyats.

W. S. R.

No. 239.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 200.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the arrest of several officials and officers there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 239.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that yesterday afternoon the Director of Public Instruction for the Erzeroum Vilayet, Dr. Abdul Kerim Bey, as well as the Chief Accountant of the Régi, Setrak Effendi Pastournadjian, Captain Moukhtar Bey, and Lieutenants Tewfik and Emnier were arrested and imprisoned. No explanation of this measure has yet been given, and the prisoners are forbidden any communication

with their friends, but it is generally believed that they are accused of participation in the "Jeune Turquie" movement, and that the orders for their arrest emanate from Constantinople.

The case of Abdul Kerim Bey has caused a considerable sensation among the higher officials here as he is popular and respected, nor has he been noted for special freedom in the expression of his political opinions, which, indeed, are in agreement with those of the vast majority of his colleagues, in so far as the condemnation of present Turkish policy is concerned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 240.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 201.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 94 of the 9th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting that the prisoners under arrest for the murder of the Christian Mouavin of the Kaïmakam of Charsandjak had been sent to Khozat for trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 240.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Kharput, March 6, 1897.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 9 of the 27th January last, having reference to the murder of Bogos Effendi Tutoyan, late Assistant to the Kaïmakam of the Charsanjak, I now have the honour to report to your Excellency that the prisoners therein alluded to have been sent to Khozat for their trial.

The report, however, of the Juge d'Instruction at Peri has not yet been submitted, I understand, to the Cour des Mises on Accusation at Kharput; and it would, therefore, still be possible for the Public Prosecutor, together with the relatives of the deceased and the prisoners themselves, to obtain a transfer of the case to the chief town of the vilayet. I have very little hope, however, of any steps being taken in that direction, or of the accused meeting with a fair trial.

I learn that the French Consul at Erzeroum has received information to the same effect.

The Kaïmakam in question is to be revoked, the Vali tells me, and some graduate of the Civil School at Constantinople will be appointed to succeed him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 241.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 206.)
My Lord, *Pera, March 24, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 19 A of the 8th January, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Turkish papers of the 22nd contained an official announcement to the effect that a further and final prolongation of two months had been accorded by Imperial Irade for the return of Armenians who had left the country, such period to date from the expiration of the last extension of seventy-five days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 242.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 29.)

(No. 207.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 25, 1897.*

YOUR Lordship will be aware from various telegrams which I have addressed to the Foreign Office that the Vilayet of Sivas has lately been the scene of a renewal of the disturbances which marked the end of the year 1895.

I have now the honour to forward copies of correspondence which will put your Lordship in full possession of the details of these occurrences, and of the communications which have passed between Her Majesty's Embassy and the Sublime Porte on the subject.

On Tuesday, the 9th March, the first disorders occurred at Ghemerek, and though Major Bulman at first reported the matter as being of no importance, a telegram (Inclosure No. 1) from the French Vice-Consul at Sivas, which was communicated to me by M. Cambon, proved that the disturbance was more serious than was at first thought, and I accordingly instructed Major Bulman to support the representations which his colleague was making for a proper investigation and the adequate punishment of the authors of the disturbances.

The account given by Major Bulman in his despatch No. 4 of the 12th March, coincides exactly with that telegraphed by the French Vice-Consul, and he has since informed me that he had already demanded the punishment of the rioters, and had sent a special messenger to Ghemerek to collect evidence. As soon as his further report reaches me, I shall forward it to your Lordship.

On the 19th instant a far more serious disturbance occurred at Tokat, and from telegrams received by me and by the French Ambassador from our Vice-Consuls in Sivas, there appeared to be every probability of the disorders spreading to that town unless immediate and serious measures were taken to prevent such a result.

At a meeting of Ambassadors held the following day it was decided that the Dragomans of the six Embassies should at once proceed to the Porte and call the serious attention of the Imperial Government to the massacre at Tokat, and urge on them the necessity of taking every possible precaution to prevent a similar disaster at Sivas.

Subsequent telegrams received by me and my French colleague, as well as a telegram received through a private source, proved that the affair had been far more serious than had been first reported. It is impossible to state as yet with certainty the number of people killed, but the fact that the slaughter and pillage lasted for eight hours would lead one to believe that the massacre took place with the connivance of the local authorities, if not of the Palace itself.

Under these circumstances, it appeared to me that if a renewal of the former massacres was to be prevented, some striking example must be made and a clear and definite communication in this sense from the Powers would be necessary.

In order to lose no time, I first instructed Mr. Block to make the following statement to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in my name:—

"If steps are not immediately taken for the removal of the authorities at Tokat, and the punishment of those guilty of these murders, it will be clear that massacres have again been allowed by the Palace, as they were last year. It will be my duty to report in this sense to my Government, and the effect that a renewal of such crimes will have upon the action of Europe under present circumstances may be imagined.

"My conviction as to the complicity of the Palace is confirmed by the obvious determination of the Sultan, notwithstanding his promises, to maintain the Vali of Adana in a post where he is doing his utmost to bring about disturbances."

At the request of Tewfik Pasha, Mr. Block left a copy of this statement for communication to the Palace.

My representations, especially my remarks as to the effect likely to be produced in Europe by a renewal of the events which had in former years so excited public opinion, appear to have produced the desired effect. The same day the Sublime Porte communicated to me copies of the telegraphic instructions, which I communicated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 149 of the 22nd instant, issued to the authorities at Sivas, enjoining on them the necessity of discovering and bringing to justice the authors of the disturbances at Tokat, and of taking every precaution to prevent any outbreak at Sivas, and likewise a copy of a Circular telegram, also transmitted to your Lordship in my telegram No. 149, addressed to the provincial authorities throughout the Empire, pointing

out the special importance, in the present state of politics, of preventing the slightest disturbance of the public peace, and making all officials responsible for any disorders that might occur in their districts.

At the same time, an Iradé was issued appointing a Commission to proceed to Tokat to institute an inquiry on the spot.

Experience has proved the futility of such instructions and Special Commissions, and it appeared to me that some more practical measures, such as the arrest of the responsible officials, must be demanded from the Porte as a proof of their good faith. I accordingly requested Baron de Calice to summon a meeting of Ambassadors to consider what joint representations should be made.

At this meeting, which was held on the 23rd, we agreed to draw up a Memorandum, to be presented to the Porte, declaring that the dispatch of the Commission to Tokat was insufficient, and demanding that orders should be sent for the immediate trial and execution of the culprits.

Before, however, it could be sent off, a communication was received at the meeting from the Foreign Minister stating that orders had been telegraphed to the Vali, who was at Tokat, for the arrest and dismissal of Mahmoud Nazim Pasha, the Mutessarif, Hasni Effendi, Commander of the Gendarmerie, and Yacoub Effendi, Chief of the Police, and that the Commission, which was to leave the following day, would have full powers to try without appeal the authors of the disorders, and all persons directly or indirectly implicated in them. This information was subsequently embodied in a note addressed by Tewfik Pasha to the Austrian Ambassador, copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

In view of the fact that the Sultan had for the first time given orders for the prompt arrest of the authorities responsible for massacres, we decided to substitute for the proposed Memorandum a note recapitulating the statements of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and simply adding that the Ambassadors had taken act of the contents, and were awaiting with interest the result of the proposed measures, which they would immediately refer to their respective Governments.

I also inclose a translation of a Notice which appeared in the Turkish papers this morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 242.

The French Vice-Consul at Sivas to M. Cambon.

(Télégraphique.) *Sivas, le 14 Mars, 1897.*

LES indications suivantes m'ont été envoyées de Ghemerek à la date du 9 courant à 5 heures du matin:—

Des Musulmans ont pénétré dans l'église Arménienne de la localité, et ont tiré des coups de revolver sur le prêtre qui officiait, et sur les fidèles qui s'y trouvaient. Un homme et deux femmes Chrétiennes, et un Musulman furent blessés hors de l'église par les Musulmans assemblés au seuil de l'église.

Dès que les Arméniens eurent connaissance de ces faits, ils prirent des dispositions pour se défendre contre les Musulmans venus en grand nombre des environs appelés préalablement par les Turcs. Devant cette attitude ferme des Arméniens, les Musulmans sont partis en volant quelque centaines de moutons.

Quelques Musulmans ont été arrêtés, ce qui me porte à croire que l'autorité n'est pas fautive dans cette affaire, dont elle n'a pas eu connaissance.

L'émotion a été vive. Il est nécessaire que les fauteurs des troubles reçoivent une punition exemplaire. C'est dans ce sens que j'agis auprès du Vali.

Inclosure 2 in No. 242.

Vice-Consul Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Sivas, March 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that on Tuesday last, about 5 A.M., a party of Turks entered the Armenian church at Ghemerek and fired some shots with revolvers. The Armenians in the church fled, and gave the alarm. Two Armenian women and one man

were wounded in escaping by Turks, who had collected at the door of the church. The Armenians, who are in a majority of four to one at Ghemerek, at once armed themselves with what weapons they had, and prepared to defend the village. From 1,000 to 2,000 Turks from neighbouring villages had arrived outside the village, and were preparing to attack it, but when they found they would be opposed, fired a few shots, and then went to the Armenian village of Tekmen, two hours distant, where they carried off some hundreds of sheep. That the attack was premeditated does not admit of a doubt, and the village escaped solely from the precipitate action of the Turks inside in attacking the church before the other Turks had arrived, and thus giving the Armenians time to prepare, but it does not appear that the Government was in any way implicated, and the immediate dispatch of troops from Sivas, and the arrest of about twenty Turks, leads to the supposition that the attempt was made without the cognizance of the authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 242.

Tewfik Pasha to the Austrian Ambassador.

SE référant à sa communication verbale de ce jour, Tewfik Pacha a l'honneur d'informer son Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche-Hongrie, avec la prière d'en donner avis à ses collègues, qu'en attendant l'arrivée à Tokat du tribunal extraordinaire, le Gouverneur, le Commandant de la Gendarmerie, et le Commissaire de Police de l'endroit ont été déjà destitués et mis aux arrêts. Le tribunal dont il s'agit est investi de pleins pouvoirs de juger irrévocablement et en dernier ressort les fauteurs des regrettables désordres, et tous les personnages y impliqués directement ou indirectement d'après la plus grande rigueur des lois de l'Empire. Le dit tribunal quittera demain Constantinople et portera à la connaissance du public le but de sa mission.

Le 23 Mars, 1897.

Inclosure 4 in No. 242.

Memorandum.

March 25, 1897.

TO-DAY'S Turkish papers contain following official communication, dated the 12th (24th) March:—

(Translation.)

"Upon the occurrence of an incident at Tokat last Friday, 19th March, when several deaths took place, the Vali at once proceeded with all rapidity to Tokat, and used every effort for the restoration of order and tranquillity. This incident has caused deep sorrow to His Imperial Majesty, who has ordered by Iradé that order is at once to be restored in the Sivas Vilayet and the Sandjak of Tokat, that the guilty are to be arrested and handed over to justice. The necessary directions have been given to the Vali, and strong instructions have been sent to all the Valis in Asia Minor that all civil and military officials are to use continual vigilance for the maintenance of order, it being further added that any official, high or low, who may in the slightest way disregard this warning, will incur grave responsibility. A Commission has been formed with full power to punish the ringleaders in this regrettable event (which occurred among the lowest classes at Tokat, and is deeply regretted by all the better class, who did their best to prevent it), to restore all plundered property, if any, and severely punish the thieves, as well as to try and punish the Mutessarif Mahmoud Nazim Pasha, and the police officer and Commissary of Gendarmes, who have been dismissed and arrested, and are now under interrogation because, though having obtained timely warning of the impending regrettable outbreak, they had taken no means to prevent it, as also other officials.

"This Commission will consist of Hassan Fehmi Pasha, Head of the Customs, President; Shevki Bey, President of the Court of Cassation; Jelal Bey, President of the Criminal Court; Malik Effendi,* Member of the Orphan Council; Lieutenant-

* An Ulema.

General Hassan Edib Pasha, Member of the Military Inspection Commission; Yanko Vithynos Effendi, ex-Mushain of Crete; and Dilber Effendi, Member of the Commission of Reforms.

"This Commission is constituted into an extraordinary tribunal, and leaves to-day (Wednesday) viâ Samsoon for Tokat.

"*March* 12 (24), 1897."

No. 243.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 30, 8:30 P.M.)

No. 180.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Pera, March* 30, 1897, 8 P.M.

VALI of Sivas has been dismissed.

No. 244.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 30.)

(No. 184.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 30, 1897, 7·10 P.M.

THE French Consul has telegraphed from Sivas to say that the Capuchin Monks at Malatia are in danger, that in several of the villages in the neighbourhood of Tokat massacres have taken place, and that two priests have been killed. M. Cambon and myself are making joint representations.

No. 245.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 31.)

(No. 185.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 31, 1897, 11·14 A.M.

MAJOR BULMAN has arrived at Tokat. I have just heard from him that eighty-nine were killed in the town and thirty-six wounded, and that in three neighbouring villages the Armenian houses have been pillaged.

The Commandant has not yet been arrested.

He expects the Commission on Thursday.

No. 246.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received March* 31.)

(No. 186.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, March* 31, 1897, 11·15 A.M.

MR. MONAHAN telegraphs that nine of the chief most dangerous Mussulmans in Bitlis were arrested last night. It seems that they were preparing a massacre. It is said that the Vali has telegraphed to Constantinople demanding their banishment.

Mr. Monahan reports that there has been recently great uneasiness in the town, but that the Christians are much pleased by the praiseworthy conduct of the Vali, and it is hoped that his action will be supported.

No. 247.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 187.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 1, 1897, 10·30 A.M.*

I HAVE received a telegram from Mr. Barnham at Aleppo, stating that the Vali has informed him of the arrival at Suedia of four agents of the Hunt'chag Society, and that measures are being taken for their arrest.

No. 248.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 1, 1897, 1·45 P.M.*

MR. BARNHAM has just telegraphed that the men referred to in my telegram No. 187 of to-day have been ascertained to be two of those who were recently released under the amnesty and not strangers: he adds that there is no cause for alarm.

No. 249.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received April 3.)

Sir, *Admiralty, April 1, 1897.*

I AM commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a letter from the Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's ship "Astræa," dated the 12th March, respecting the state of affairs at Alexandretta.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 249.

Captain Barry to Admiral Sir J. Hopkins.

(No. 17.)
Sir, *"Astræa," at Alexandretta, March 12, 1897.*

IN continuation of my letter of proceedings No. 9 of the 19th February, I have the honour to inform you that, in consequence of a telegram received from Mr. Catoni, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul at Alexandretta, I left Beyrout on the 3rd, and arrived here at 8 A.M. on the 4th instant.

The Christians in this district have for some time been very nervous, expecting an attack to be made on them during Bairam, partly on account of the usual excitement of the Moslems at that time; and also the Greeks were afraid that they would be attacked in revenge for the disturbances in Crete.

Bairam finished on the 6th March, and no disturbances whatever have taken place, the Moslems from the neighbourhood having returned to their homes peacefully, and everything seems perfectly quiet as far as can be seen.

There are 2,000 Christians in Alexandretta, and if they only showed a little courage, and it was known that they would defend themselves, these panics would not occur. I am sorry to say that the few British subjects here do not show them an example in this respect.

The Greek Consul-General at Beyrout, in discussing the matter with me, described the inhabitants of Alexandretta as "un pen poltron," which seems very appropriate.

About 1,500 additional troops have landed here during February and proceeded inland, the garrison of Alexandretta has been reduced to about 100 men, and the

additional troops it had been intended to send to this district have been countermanded on account of the Cretan affairs.

The health of the ship's company remains particularly good.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. D. BARRY.

No. 250.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 3.)

(No. 245.)
My Lord, *Paris, April 2, 1897.*

NUBAR PASHA called at the Embassy this morning to say that he had received information from some young inhabitants of Zeitoun that all the population of Hadjin, a town near Zeitoun, are threatened with massacre, and that they were asking for help and protection.

Nubar Pasha begged that Sir Philip Currie's urgent attention might be called to the situation of these unfortunate people.

I have, &c.
(In the absence of Her Majesty's Ambassador),
(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

No. 251.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 127.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 3, 1897, 2 P.M.*

NEWS has been received at Her Majesty's Embassy at Paris that a massacre at Hadjin is imminent. This information has been supplied by Nubar Pasha.

No. 252.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 3.)

(No. 191.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 3, 1897, 9·35 P.M.*

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 127 of to-day's date: Hadjin.

Similar information has been received by the Catholic Armenian Patriarch, and it was probably through him that Nubar Pasha heard.

The French Vice-Consul at Mersina had also sent a report in the same sense, and on the strength of it the six Ambassadors sent their Dragomans to the Porte to make a joint representation.

No. 253.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 192.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 4, 1897, 11·15 A.M.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput:—

"The situation at Behesne is reported as critical. The Governor is weak and incompetent; he should be warned that he will be held responsible in the event of disturbances, and he should be instructed promptly to call together the Mussulman Notables and admonish them.

"A fortnight ago an attempt was made to massacre the Armenians, but it was stopped by the efforts of the Adjutant and Yakob Pasha, who has always exerted himself to protect the Armenians of that district."

For an account of Yakob Pasha, see inclosure in Embassy despatch No. 517 of 3rd July, 1896.

No. 254.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 192 A.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 4, 1897, 12·20 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum telegraphs as follows:—

"On the 31st March, a squadron of the 24th Regiment of cavalry and one battalion of the 25th Regiment of infantry left Erzeroum, and are to be followed by some mountain artillery as soon as the state of the roads allow of their passage.

"As far as I can make out, these troops are to be sent partly to Van and partly to Mush, but secrecy is observed as to the reason of their dispatch and their exact destination.

"According to the rumours current among the Turks, there is danger from Armenian revolutionists on the Persian frontier at Selmas, and there is a spread of disaffection in Talori and among the Nestorian tribes to the south of Van."

No. 255.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 193.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 4, 1897, 11·20 A.M.*

I HAVE the honour to repeat to your Lordship, in continuation of my telegram No. 192 A, the following further report just received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum:—

"I hear from a private source that disturbances occurred at Talori, causing the Mutessarif of Mush to telegraph here. There was an encounter between some Gharzan Kurds and a few Armenian revolutionists from Russia. Three of the former were killed, and their assailants then took refuge in Talori, which is now threatened by large numbers of Kurds.

"Unless your Excellency has received intelligence from Mr. Monahan I would suggest that a telegram be sent to inform him, and that he should be authorized to go, if necessary, to Mush, with a view of visiting the scene of disturbance, together with the soldiers."

I have adopted this suggestion.

No. 256.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 194.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 4, 1897, 12·40 P.M.*

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Military Commandant at Tokat, Hakki Pasha, whose conduct I mentioned in my telegram No. 168 of 25th March, has been arrested.

No. 257.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 209.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 27, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 93 of the 9th February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting on the manner in which the general amnesty has been carried out in that vilayet. I am making representations to the Porte with a view to obtaining the release of the seven Armenian prisoners at Mitylene, and also of Hairabet Avedisian, imprisoned at Adalia on a charge of selling gunpowder.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 257.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Smyrna, March 17, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 23rd December last, instructing me to report as to the manner in which the general amnesty granted to Armenian political prisoners is carried out in this Consular district, I have the honour to report as follows:—

At Scala Nuova, Scio, and Vourlah there have been no Armenians in prison. The Consular Agent at Aidin reported on the 24th January that there were none at Aidin, but that at Denizli there were nine Armenians in prison who had been sent there from some other part of the Empire after the Constantinople events of last summer, but he did not know on what charge. I mentioned the fact to the Governor-General of this vilayet, who telegraphed for information, and was informed that there was only one Armenian in prison, and that on a charge of theft.

I instructed our Consular Agent to make further inquiries, and he now reports that the nine men in prison when he last wrote have since been released, some remaining at Denizli and some having left.

The Vice-Consul at Mitylene reported on the 2nd February that seven Armenians were undergoing imprisonment there, one with his wife and children on the charge of blaspheming Mahomet, one for theft, and five on suspicion of having taken part in the Constantinople disturbances.

In answer to recent inquiries, Mr. Hadkinson now informs me that all these individuals are still imprisoned.

From Adalia Mr. Vice-Consul Keun reports, on the 27th January, that since the commencement of the Armenian troubles there had been only one Armenian, Hairabet Avedisian, imprisoned in that place because his shop assistant had sold a drachm or two of gunpowder, which happened to be on a shelf in the shop, to a Turkish boy during the Bairam festivities of 1894. Hairabet was tried and acquitted in April 1894. In September 1895 he was reimprisoned on the same charge, viz., selling contraband powder, and a political colour being given to the case, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Mr. Keun endeavoured to induce the authorities to apply the benefit of the amnesty to his case, but the Mutessarif and Cadi assured him it could not be done, as they asserted Hairabet was not a political prisoner. Their decision was confirmed by the Procureur-Général of Koniah when at Adalia on a tour of inspection. They, however, held out hopes of his being pardoned on the anniversary of His Imperial Majesty's accession next August. As regards Rhodes, the case of the seven Armenians released from prison there, but not allowed to leave the town, has been referred to in my despatches Nos. 135 and 10 of the 29th December, 1896, and the 8th February, 1897, respectively.

The liberation of the Armenian prisoners in Smyrna and immediate district was reported in my despatch No. 139 of the 31st December, 1896.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 258.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 213.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 29, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the activity of the Young Turkey party, and the failure of the plot to obtain the Vali's recall.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 258.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)

Trebizond, March 20, 1897.

Sir,

SOME attempts have lately been made at Trebizond to arouse the passive feelings of the Mahommedans against the present system of government. Not only have newspapers issued by the Young Turkey party been scattered in mosques and other places of habitual resort, but on the morning of the 16th ultimo (as I had the honour of wiring to your Excellency) inflammatory leaflets were found strewn in the streets of the town.

Printed at Constantinople, or abroad, to each of these papers was affixed a red seal bearing two crossed dirks, a bomb, and a couple of revolvers, flanked by the motto, "Our Rights or our Death," and surmounted by a further inscription indicating it to be the signet of the Ottoman Revolutionary Committee. The composition was in substance rabidly violent, terming the Sultan a mad dog, and calling the Osmanlis to surpass the Armenians in efforts to shake off the yoke by destroying the author of misgovernment, tyranny, and massacres. It is needless to add that though many of these fly-sheets were collected and burnt by the authorities, a large number of them were taken by the people home and read at leisure.

Their perusal among the lower classes of Turks left the impression at first that the Armenians were again at work, but such suspicions were soon dispelled by the unguarded language of the better educated, who more unreservedly than ever criticized bitterly the arbitrary and despotic rule under which they groan.

I now come to a matter affecting more closely the Governor-General, Cadri Bey. In my despatch of the 30th November last mention was made of two Commissions, of which one had arrived and the other expected, charged both of them, it was understood, with the secret mission of detecting and reporting acts of conspiracy and high treason.

The first, under Major Kiazim Bey, opened an office at the Custom-house, where since the middle of October they questioned travellers and sought for seditious papers.

The second, and more important one, composed of Aziz Bey, of the State Council; Brigadier-General Raïf Pasha, of the Staff; and Edhem Effendi, of the Finance Ministry, arrived on the 5th January, and, taking a room in the Government House, proceeded, until their departure on the 13th instant, to question individuals and ransack the archives in their endeavours to find some proofs of guilt against his Excellency Cadri Bey.

Early this month a couple of letters fell into their hands; the one was written under an assumed name by Nazim Bey, Secretary to Zekki Pasha, Commander-in-chief of the 4th Army Corps at Erzinghian, wherein the disaffected Moslems at Trebizond were asked to select leaders without delay if they wished to participate in the general scheme of revolt meditated against the Sultan. The second is the reply of the Local League to the message, wherein the suggestion is made that the leaders of the movement had better be chosen by Zekki Pasha and Cadri Bey conjointly. Mehmet Effendi, Chief Clerk of the Commercial Court, was charged to write out the answer, and he very indiscreetly not only showed, but lent, both the letters to Major Kiazim Bey, who had for some time back duped him thoroughly by speaking disparagingly of the Sultan.

Kiazim Bey informed Edhem Effendi, and they each reported the matter, in cypher, to the Palace, whence an order came to bring the papers to Constantinople. The Major left with them on the 3rd instant, but his departure was not known until the 5th, when a secret intimation reached me that he had gone to denounce some officials, and perhaps the Vali, as revolutionists. This proved to be only too true, for soon after Lieutenant-General Hamdi Pasha, the Commander of the troops at Trebizond, received an order direct from the Palace to watch, and prevent the escape of those compromised. The General had the kindness of letting this be known by the Vali, who thereupon caused Mehmet Effendi and three others to be taken into custody and questioned by the Examining Judge, a procedure which he duly reported to the Palace and the Porte, adding in his communication that no further action could well be taken by him, as, under the circumstances, he was himself placed in the position of a defendant.

My telegram of the 12th instant will have informed your Excellency the next

phase of the affair. A report that Cadri Bey was replaced by Enis Pasha, ex-Vali of Kharput, reached Trebizond, and was believed by all. The adversaries of the Vali thought this a good opportunity to undermine his Excellency's influence, and some disreputable characters, taking advantage of this, indulged in acts of turbulence. There was much excitement and great uneasiness among all sections of the inhabitants, until the Vali, to calm the public mind, expelled a few and imprisoned others. Turks, Greeks, and Armenians alike requested earnestly my colleagues and myself to solicit in favour of Cadri Bey the intervention of the Embassies. In promising to wire that his removal would at present be ill-timed and ill-advised, I recommended them strongly to use all the same in the matter their own sources of communication with the Central Government.

There is nothing more for me to add except the fact that the Russian Consul received last night a telegram from his Ambassador, informing him that assurances had been given to the effect that Cadri Bey would be maintained at his post. The news spread at once, and was received with such joy and relief as to prove beyond all doubt that Cadri Bey's popularity is great, deep, and real in this town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 259.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 214.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 29, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the receipt and publication of an Imperial message enjoining on all classes the necessity of maintaining public order.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE

Inclosure in No. 259.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Trebizond, March 23, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that Imperial orders were received yesterday, enjoining upon the people to be orderly and peaceful in these critical times.

The issue of such injunctions has been prompted, it is believed here, by the occurrence of serious disturbances at Tokat, the nature of which are as yet only vaguely known at Trebizond.

The Vali had the Sultan's message read out to the civic and religious Notables of the town, and by the use of suitable language elicited from them a promise to exercise their utmost influence in the maintenance of public order.

A warning has, moreover, been posted up to the effect that any one found with arms or in any way attempting to disturb the peace would be dealt with most severely.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 260.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 215.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 29, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 152 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad respecting the trial of the Mudir of Barwarah and the general venality of the Vali of Mosul.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 260.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 26.) *Bagdad, March 2, 1897.*

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 22, dated the 12th February, 1897, I have the honour very respectfully to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a further letter No. 8, dated the 24th ultimo, from Mr. Nimrud Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 260.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 8.) *Mosul, February 24, 1897.*

(Translation.)

WITH reference to my letter No. 6, dated the 4th instant, I have the honour to inform you that his Excellency the Vali not only has not consented to trial being instituted in the case between Reshid Beg, the Mudir of Barwarah district, and Bishop Yeshooyah, and made no call upon the latter to produce evidence in proof of his complaints against the Mudir, but has actually granted him permission to return to his post and reassume his duties, leaving certain officers to bring about a compromise between them.

I have been told that the said Mudir has paid about 200 liras in bribes in order to avoid his trial, and to be exonerated from the charges brought against him, and to continue in his office. Out of the above amount he has paid to his Excellency the Vali 120 liras, to the Assistant Procureur 30 liras, and the rest to the Cadi and others.

He has in this manner effected his escape from trial for the charges brought by the Bishop, and got the complaints to the Assistant Procureur for the murder of Tahir Beg, Abu Bekir, and other Kurds of his district to be overlooked. So he, Reshid Beg, returned to his place last week.

This treatment will no doubt lead to increased oppressions on the part of the Mudir towards the inhabitants in future, and to the recovery of the above amount, or as much again, from those who had complained against him, and those who caused him that loss.

His Excellency the Vali, after dismissal of Mustofa Selim Effendi from his office of Kaimakam at Amadieh, has in these days again appointed him in his former post on receipt of 100 liras. His Excellency sent to Suleimanieh Abdullah Pasha, the late Kaimakam of Arbil, to be Acting Mutessarif there in place of Salih Pasha, and perhaps he will after this be made permanent, for I hear he has paid the Vali about 200 liras to obtain the post. These circumstances will clearly show your Honour as to what extent his Excellency is addicted to corruption, for in such a short time since he has been here he is stated to have managed to receive bribes amounting in the aggregate to the sum of 1,500 liras. His Excellency has not even hesitated in accepting 50 liras from some Christian bad women whom he had, at the instance of His Beatitude the Patriarch of the Syrian Catholics, decided to transport, and afterwards allowed to remain in their houses.

On Thursday last, late in the evening, when Ahmed Fayiz Effendi, the Cadi, was sitting in a room in his own house, a revolver was discharged at him through the window opposite the door of his house, but the bullet missed him, and the person who fired it having taken flight, no one knows who he was; consequently, the authorities caused a number of bad people to be arrested in the hope of detecting the offender, but the Cadi holds all the inhabitants of Mosul innocent, and ascribes the offence to some of his enemies, who are the inhabitants of his native town, Suleimanieh, who were sent to Mosul as exiles; but the actual offender has not yet been detected.

On Wednesday last his Excellency the Vali invited me to supper, also their

Beatitudes the Patriarchs of the Chaldean and Syrian Catholic communities; and on the following day he invited M. Ray, the French Consular Agent, with the Latin Delegate and the Head of the Dominican Fathers.

(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 261.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 217.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 31, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the proposed appointment of Hakki Effendi, ex-Kaimakam of Eghin, to the post of Professor at the "Idadié" school in Mezreh. I have protested to the Porte against the appointment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 261.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16. Confidential.)

Sir, *Kharput, March 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram of to-day's date, and to report that it is proposed to nominate Hakki Effendi, the late Acting Kaimakam of Eghin, who was foremost in arranging the unprovoked and cowardly massacre of Christians in that town, as Professor—if not Director—of the "Idadié" school at Mezreh. The nomination in question is probably dependent upon the initiative taken by the local Director of Public Instruction, whose character and accomplishments were roughly sketched in my report No. 11 to your Excellency of the 6th ultimo. He is pressing on a marriage, it appears, between his daughter and Hakki Effendi, who is well known to have amassed great wealth from the sack of Eghin.

This proposed alliance of infamy with ignorance may perhaps be appropriate; but the mere idea of intrusting a notorious villain of the stamp of Hakki Effendi (who deployed such forethought and energy in rendering scores of harmless children orphans) with the task of setting an example for, and instilling precept into, the mind of youth is more than preposterous.

I may add that Hakki Effendi's appointment to the office of Kaimakam to Chemish Gesek, reported in my telegram of the 19th November last, was discussed by the members of the Administrative Council here; and even they finally decided that the said appointment ought to be cancelled, and this in spite of the pusillanimity and supineness which seem to involve their ordinary deliberations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 262.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 219.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March 31, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting on the forced conversions in the districts of Chabakjur and Cuendj.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 262.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.)
Sir,

Diarbekir, March 16, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that, during my recent visit on relief business to the Kaïmakamlik of Chabakjur, in the Mutessariflik of Guendj, in the Bitlis Vilayet, I ascertained that the rumour, reported in my despatch No. 4 of the 26th January, of disturbances having occurred in Guendj this winter, was without foundation.

The need of relief in Chabakjur appeared to me to have been exaggerated. The people heard of money being sent to other districts, and were eager to claim their share. I left £ T. 300 there to be distributed for food and oxen among the most needy by two native agents, and propose to devote the remaining 200*l.* of the sum allotted to Chabakjur to completing the relief here, where the need is greater.

I was petitioned to intervene on behalf of some forty or fifty houses which had turned Moslem, and wished, but feared, to revert to Christianity. I inclose a list of these villages, with the number of such houses in each, as they were given to me, and a note of the names of the villages written in Turkish for better identification.

I spoke to the Acting Kaïmakam of Chabakjur with regard to the villages in his district. He declared to me publicly that there was no ground for fear, and that the Government would interfere in any case of molestation.

I also spoke on the subject to the Kurdish Agha of one of the Guendj villages. He called the heads of the houses in question in his village, and told them before me that he would give them an undertaking under his seal that, if they wished to revert, they should not be molested.

Such declarations may possibly not be of great value. But, in the latter instance, the converts, who had ample opportunity of communicating privately with me and my servants had they wished during the two nights I spent in the village, did not throw any doubt on the Agha's good faith. They simply said that, having become Moslems, it was not worth while changing again. They certainly have every inducement to remain as they are, and, if they are satisfied with their new religion, it is the simplest and most practical solution of the question. There is no apparent difference of race, and Moslems and Christians speak the same language, "Zazar," a dialect derived from Persian. In the Agha's own words: "If they remain Mussulmans, we are brothers; if they become Christians, we are neighbours."

One difficulty in the way of their reverting is the question of the military exemption tax. Since their profession of Islam, they have not paid this; and they fear that, if they are recognized as Christians again, they will be called upon for arrears.

The question, if let alone, will, I imagine, end in the majority remaining Moslems. The only way to clear it up would be for a Commission from Guendj to visit the villages. In that case, it would be necessary to settle the question of the demand for arrears of the military exemption tax, and to obtain undertakings from the Aghas and Beys of the different villages for the protection of those who revert.

When the two relief agents return here in three weeks' time I may learn some further development of this question.

There is some talk of the whole district of Guendj being detached from the Bitlis Vilayet, and placed under Diarbekir, as it was some years ago; but the Vali tells me that nothing has yet been decided at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 262.

List of Villages, with Number of Houses in each.

GUENDJ.

Chimayeni	5	Valir	7
Kunar	6	Dushmalan	2
Damyeni	7	Girnos	5
Dairibok	8	Devejurin	6

CHABAKJUR.

Dik	5	Madrak Lotan	4
Gharib	3	Terbesan	(?)

No. 263.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 220.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, March 31, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting the state of uneasiness prevailing in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 263.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir,

Diarbekir, March 16, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that, on my return here from Chabakjur on the 11th instant, I found the town in a state of panic, which had started just before Baïram. The panic is general throughout the country, and is due apparently to the rumour of war having broken out.

The Vali, Khalid Bey, is energetic in taking precautions to prevent any disturbance. My French colleague telegraphed to his Embassy during my absence for instructions to be sent to the Vali in this sense, which was done.

As long as the authorities keep a tight hold, I do not think there is any ground for alarm. It is, however, impossible to convince the Christians of this.

They have no confidence in the good faith of the Government, and argue, with some reason, that they received the same assurances up to within an hour of the last massacre.

No one here knows what is really happening at Constantinople, and the wildest tales are spread.

There is a rumour that the military exemption tax has been remitted by "Iradeh" for two years in the case of districts which suffered during the "events." If this is true, and if the "Iradeh" is carried out, it will be more to the point than any further relief. Severity in the collection of this tax is the chief complaint heard on all sides.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

No. 264.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 231.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 31, 1897.

THOUGH the political situation in Turkey at this moment presents few hopeful features, it is worth noticing that the attitude of the Government towards the authorities responsible for outrages on Armenians is quite different from what it was in the winter of 1895–96.

At that time not a single official of any importance was dismissed, or otherwise punished on account of the disorders which had taken place in the districts under his charge. In the last few days, however, the Valis of Adana and Sivas have been dismissed. Various officials have been placed under arrest at Tokat. The Kaïmakam of Arbaa, where disturbances were rumoured to have taken place, was promptly transferred, and a telegram received to-day from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis reports that the Governor-General of that town has arrested nine important Mussulmans suspected of planning a massacre.

I have received telegrams from some of Her Majesty's Consuls in Anatolia, announcing that the authorities have published Proclamations in the sense of the Circular instructions of the Sublime Porte, which I repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 149 of the 22nd March.

The success which has recently attended my representations and those of the other Ambassadors, is a proof that the Porte at last admit that the disturbances are not due to revolutionary attacks made by Armenians, but to the fanaticism or rapacity of the Mahommedan population, and the negligence or active encouragement of the Ottoman officials.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 265.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 224.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 1, 1897.

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 98 of the 12th March, informing me that the Admiralty would instruct Her Majesty's ship "Astræa" to proceed to Mersina and take Major Massy along the coast for the purpose of distributing the money granted by the Constantinople Relief Committee for the alleviation of the distress in the Payas district, I immediately telegraphed to Major Massy to inform him of the fact, and at the same time communicated your Lordship's decision to my colleagues.

In reply to a request for instructions from Major Massy, I informed him that he should confine himself to the distribution of relief, and to giving such advice on local matters as came within the province of a Consular officer.

Considerable delay has unfortunately occurred in the execution of Major Massy's proposed visit owing to the "Astræa" being ordered elsewhere. I had already arranged that he should proceed in the ordinary way to Payas, starting on the 1st April, when I received your Lordship's telegram informing me that Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" was under orders to proceed to Mersina.

From a telegram received yesterday from Major Massy I learn that the ship had arrived, and that he proposed to leave on her for Payas last night.

I have already had the honour to inform your Lordship that the Vali of Adana, of whose supineness and incapacity Major Massy has so often had reason to complain, has at length, owing to the joint representations of the Ambassadors, been dismissed from his post, so that there is reason to hope that the deplorable condition of that vilayet, and especially of the Payas district, may be somewhat improved.

The new Vali is named Hussein Hilmi, and was formerly Mutessarif of Maan on the borders of Arabia. He professes readiness to listen to Major Massy's recommendations, especially about Payas, and I have accordingly instructed the latter to try and cultivate friendly relations with him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 266.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 225.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 1, 1897.

IN my despatch No. 207 of the 25th March, I had the honour to inform your Lordship of the dispatch of an Ottoman Commission to Tokat to inquire into the recent massacre at that place.

At a meeting of Ambassadors held on the 25th, the opinion was generally expressed that the proceedings of the Commission would not be likely to prove satisfactory without the presence of some European Delegate. I, therefore, offered to send Major Bulman from Sivas, provided the French Vice-Consul at that place were authorized to take charge of British interests during his absence, while M. Nélidow undertook to send the Russian Vice-Consul at Samsoon. It was accordingly agreed that these two officials should represent the six Embassies at the sittings of the Commission, and the following communication was drawn up for presentation to the Minister for Foreign Affairs:—

"La Sublime Porte ayant informé les Ambassadeurs qu'une Commission Extraordinaire munie de larges pouvoirs se rendrait à Tokat pour faire une enquête sur les désordres qui s'y sont produits et punir les coupables, les Ambassadeurs ont décidé d'y déléguer de leur côté le Vice-Consul d'Angleterre à Sivas et le Vice-Consul de Russie à Samsoon pour assister à l'enquête sans y participer, et les renseigner à ce sujet. La Sublime Porte est priée de donner à qui de droit les ordres en conséquence."

This communication was presented to the Foreign Minister the following day by the Dragomans of the six Embassies, who were further instructed to draw his Excellency's serious attention to the critical state of Sivas, and to point out that disturbances might break out there at any moment if Nouri Bey and Mehmed Bey, the two officials whose removal Major Bulman had urgently requested, were allowed to stay there, as they were strongly suspected of having taken a leading part in the massacres of 1895, and were even now said to be inciting the Moslem population. The Dragomans further informed his Excellency that the reports of the French and British Vice-Consuls at Sivas tended to throw the principal responsibility for the massacre on Hakki Pasha, the military Commandant at Tokat, and that the Ambassadors, therefore, demanded the arrest and dismissal of this officer in addition to those already similarly punished. His Excellency stated, in reply, that Hakki Pasha, as far as he was aware, was not Commandant at Tokat, but Commander of the Reserves at Sivas, and that he had gone to Tokat after the massacre with the Vali; the officer in command of the troops at Tokat, a captain, had already been arrested and dismissed. The Dragomans also called Tewfik Pasha's attention to the generally unsatisfactory state of the Vilayet of Sivas, saying that the Vali was a man in whom no confidence could be placed, and absolutely unfit for his post, as he had already upon his hands the responsibility of previous massacres.

They warned the Porte that the Ambassadors would hold the Vali personally responsible for anything that might occur.

This threat had the desired effect, as three days later I was informed that the Vali of Sivas had been dismissed. The Sublime Porte has further shown its desire to give satisfaction to the wishes of the Embassies by the transfer of the Kaïmakam of Erbaa, a small place near Tokat, where disturbances were rumoured to have taken place, as I reported to your Lordship in my telegram No. 167A of the 25th ultimo, and the appointment of Bekir Pasha, Mutessarif of Tokat, in place of the disgraced Governor.

Major Bulman, since his arrival at Tokat, has telegraphed to me the following details:—

At Tokat, eighty-nine persons were killed and thirty-six wounded; in the neigh-

fairhood, the Armenian village of Birkunjik was pillaged, and twelve persons killed; at Biserie, the monastery and twelve houses were pillaged, and sixteen persons were killed, including two priests, who were mutilated; at Varay, a Mussulman village with only eight Armenian houses, those houses were pillaged and four Armenians killed. While at Kurdji, also a Mussulman village, the only four Armenian houses were pillaged, and three persons killed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 267.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 254.)
(Extract.) *Paris, April 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, extracted from the "Journal Officiel" of this day, the report *in extenso* of questions addressed to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs by Messrs. Gauthier (de Clagny) and Denys Cochin on the course of affairs in the East and the recent massacres at Tokat.*

In reply to M. Denys Cochin the Minister read the communications which had passed between him and M. Cambon with regard to the massacres at Tokat, and reminded the Chamber of the project of reforms which had been signed by all the Ambassadors at Constantinople.

No. 268.

[Nil.

No. 269.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 198.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 6, 1897.*

VERY bad accounts have been received by the Ambassadors of the past career of the new Vali of Sivas. He was Governor-General of the Hedjaz at the time of the attack on the Consuls at Jeddah. Neither the Porte nor the new Council of Selection had any voice in his appointment, which was made directly by the Palace.

We have therefore instructed our Dragomans to make a representation, and to state the choice of such a man has manifestly been prompted by an intention to hinder the working of the Special Commission.

No. 270.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 6.)

(No. 200.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 6, 1897.*

I COMMUNICATED to Mr. Monahan the news from Erzeroum, telegraphed to your Lordship in my No. 193, and have now received the following reply:—

"I have heard of no disturbances at Mush, though I have excellent correspondents there. Within the last five days a private messenger with letters and a traveller have arrived, but did not even hint at the occurrence of disturbances.

"The Vali last night said that two battalions were on their way to strengthen the Mush garrison for the summer, as ordered by an Iradé issued eight months ago; otherwise he absolutely contradicted the account given in Mr. Graves' telegram.

"Within the last three weeks some fifty infantry of the Bitlis garrison have been removed to Mush; and on the 18th March the Military Commandant of Bitlis, whose transfer had been officially announced, left for his new post viâ Mush, where he still is.

"Even if I can get the Vali's assistance, I foresee that I shall meet with difficulties from the military authorities in accompanying the troops. I shall start for Mush this afternoon or to-morrow, and I would beg your Excellency to telegraph there in Turkish figures whether you are applying for facilities for my journey with the troops in case any are sent."

In view of these facts, I have told Mr. Monahan that there seems no necessity for him to accompany the troops, but have instructed him to report again upon his arrival at Mush.

* Not printed.

No. 271.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 7.)

(No. 203. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 7, 1897, midday.*

THE following telegram has been received from Major Bulman at Tokat:—

"One hundred and eighty-five persons have been arrested.

"The Vali has returned to Sivas, and I fear that if he comes back he will use his influence to hamper the working of the Commission. The Russian Consul is strongly Turcophile, and I should be glad of the presence here of my French colleague at Sivas, who might intrust the charge of the Consulate there to the American, who is expected to arrive this week.

"Some of those arrested assert that they had been told that an Imperial Order had been issued for a massacre at Tokat. The trials will not begin this week.

"The Military Commandant has been ordered to proceed to Erzinjan. I have protested against this, and have demanded that he shall be put on trial for murder of Armenians. See my despatch No. 5."

This despatch was forwarded to your Lordship in my No. 241 of the 5th April.

No. 272.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 205.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 8, 1897, 5 P.M.*

JOINT representations have been made by the Embassies on the following points:—

1. The removal of the new Military Commandant at Jerusalem, the new Vali of Sivas, and other objectionable officials.

2. The appointment of a Christian Governor at Hadjin.

3. The disturbed condition of Yozgat, Talori, and Cæsarea, as well as other Armenian districts, from which disquieting Consular reports have been received.

No. 273.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 206.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 8, 1897, 3·10 P.M.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 420 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to repeat to your Lordship a telegram from Major Massy at Payas, transmitted to me by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Alexandretta:—

"I am discussing the question of local reforms with the Assistant Governor, who is here. The distribution of relief is proceeding."

No. 274.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 208.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 8, 1897, 10·45 P.M.*

M. CAMBON inquired of the Ambassadors to-day whether we thought the time had come for presenting reforms to the Sultan, saying that the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had asked him his opinion on the subject.

We were unanimous in thinking that it was necessary to wait either until the present crisis was over, or until the Sultan should find himself in such a position as would force him to submit, but that at present nothing could be done.

No. 275.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie

(No. 105.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 10, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 1,062 of the 17th December last, I shall be obliged if you will inform me whether any reply has been received from the Porte to the *pro memoriâ* presented by your Excellency on the subject of the massacre at Eghin, and whether any punishment has been inflicted on the officials responsible for the massacre.

A question has recently been asked in Parliament in regard to this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 276.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 3.)
My Lord, *Batoum, March 12, 1897.*

HAVING recently noticed in the London papers that the Russian Government was showing considerable activity in military preparations, and was also dispatching troops towards the Russo-Turkish frontier in Asia Minor, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that inquiries made by me have elicited that these statements are not quite correct, and that although a considerable number of troops is at present stationed along the south-western frontier, yet that no actual movement is taking place.

It is nevertheless true that for the ostensible reason of preventing the importation of plague into the country the corps of frontier guards is being strengthened to an extent which deserves notice, for it is stated that no less than 35,000 men are now on their way to the Trans-Caucasian confines of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS.

No. 277.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 8.)
My Lord, *Batoum, March 24, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, that a large number of Greeks, all of whom are Turkish subjects, and inhabitants of Asia Minor, are now finding their way into the Trans-Caucasus, through Batoum.

An Austrian Lloyds' steamer which arrived here two or three days ago landed over 200 such refugees who had been embarked at the various Turkish ports along the Anatolian coast, and it is stated that several more batches are expected to arrive here in the course of the next week or two.

Up to the present the authorities have placed no obstacles in the way of these refugees, and have granted them permission to land here provided their passports bear the required visés of the Russian Consuls at the ports at which they embark.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS.

No. 278.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 228.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 5, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting an interruption in the telegraph line between that place and Bussorah owing to the destruction of over 100 poles by Arabs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 278.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 28.)
Sir, *Bagdad, March 9, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour very respectfully to place below, for your Excellency's information, extract from diary of Her Majesty's Consul at Bussorah under date the 3rd March, 1897:—

"It is reported that Hasan Khayun and his followers have reappeared in places between Gurna and Shatra, and they have destroyed more than 100 telegraph poles, thereby causing an interruption in the telegraph line between Bussorah and Bagdad."

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

No. 279.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 229.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 5, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 217 of the 31st ultimo, I have the honour to report that, in reply to the representations made by the Dragomans of the Six Embassies, the Foreign Minister stated that there is no intention of appointing Hakki Bey, ex-Kaimakam of Eghin, to the post of Professor of the Idadieh school at Kharput.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 280.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 231.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, April 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith an extract from a letter which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting that there are no signs yet of any concentration of Russian troops on the Turkish frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 280.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 27, 1897.

(Extract.)

CAPTAIN ELLIOT arrived here yesterday, and will push on to Van in a day or two. He tells me he saw no present signs of concentration of Russian troops at Kars or Sarikamish, and, indeed, from what he says of the state of the roads and the deep snow which still covers the country, it is too early in the season for any such movements of troops to be made without great difficulty and hardship.

No. 281.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 232.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, April 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, criticizing a despatch of Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabriz published in the Turkey Blue Book No. 3, 1897, respecting the massacre of Armenians consequent on their revolutionary attempt at Van in 1896.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 281.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir,
Van, March 14, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to make a few remarks on a letter from Consul-General Wood to Sir Mortimer Durand published on the first page of Blue Book, "Turkey No. 3 (1897)."

The outbreak began on Monday. The only occasion on which guns were used was on Saturday, when one of the revolutionist posts was shelled and captured by the troops. Up to that time no Armenians had quitted Van. On the contrary, a band of about fifty had come in. All the revolutionists who left did so on the night of Saturday.

Mr. Wood speaks of the Hunchakists and Armenists, and omits all mention of the Tashnakists, the most numerous and best armed of the three Societies represented at Van.

He is incorrect in supposing that there was any question of safe conduct for the revolutionists who left for Russia. I have never even heard such a thing suggested.

The Monastery of Varak was plundered and partly burnt by Kurds before the revolutionists left Van. The most valuable books were saved.

Mr. Wood states that "I was assisted in all my efforts by the Acting Russian Representative."

The Russian Dragoman was most anxious to do what he could; but having strict orders not to interfere in local matters, he was powerless. This abstention from all interference of the Russian Representative here, even in time of grave crisis, is an important factor in the complicated problem of the day. Not very long ago he asked me to lend him a copy of the scheme of reforms, remarking that he had never heard of them officially.

Generally speaking, I think Mr. Wood's despatch gives a wrong impression of what happened.

It is now well known that the revolutionists were preparing a rebellion at Van, but were not ready. I believe the rising was to have coincided with the attack on the Ottoman Bank.

No one can fail to sympathize with any real and *bond fide* attempt of a population to throw off the Turkish yoke; but the wicked thing about this movement has been that it never had a chance of success, and was bound to involve the lives of thousands of innocent people.

During the week in question all my efforts were directed to getting the outlying people collected in the Mission, and to preventing the Turks making a general attack on the posts of the revolutionists. For if this had taken place the troops would have got out of hand, and Van would have been destroyed. It was clear that the revolutionists had to be got rid of somehow, and the risk of a massacre after they surrendered was less than it would have been if they had been driven out by force of arms. As they did not accept the terms which had been offered them, subject to the approval of the Ambassadors and the Sultan, the Turks took one of their posts. This showed them the futility of trying to resist the troops, and they happily took to flight. Divided counsels and want of discipline made them an easy prey, and they were nearly all cut to pieces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 283.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 233.)
My Lord,
Constantinople, April 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, reporting the appearance of Greek pirates near Rhodes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 282.

Vice-Consul Billotti to Consul Cumberbatch.

(No. 14.)
Sir,
Rhodes, March 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Vali at Rhodes has received this morning via Boudroum a telegram from Nissiros (Indjirli-Adassi), an island near Cos, informing him that a piratical Greek boat, with about twenty persons on board, had made its appearance on that island. That they landed at a very small village near the seashore called Pali, and arrested three natives, Christians, from whom they asked for some money, but, being very poor people, they subsequently released them. The pirates then entered another house, asking for money, and threatening to murder the owner, also a Christian. After having plundered the house they left the place.

On their way back to their boat they met a zaptieh, took from him his rifle, and then released him without further molesting him.

The Turkish despatch-boat stationed at Rhodes, as also the one stationed at Marmarice, cannot proceed to Nissiros as requested by the authorities, being in want of coals, and no Turkish Government coals existing now at Rhodes and Marmarice.

The Vali has ordered some zaptiehs to proceed by first opportunity to Nissiros.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. BILLOTTI.

No. 283.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 236.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, April 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the present condition of the Caza of Arjisch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 283.

Mr. Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir,

Van, March 12, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a statement showing the present condition of the Caza of Arjisch.

It will be seen that the greater number of the villages are occupied by Kurds, the original inhabitants having mostly fled to Alashgird, Bayazid, and Russia. Two villages are occupied by the households of Emin and Hadji Temer Pashas, who are now at Erzinghian.

At Asseraf, Emin Pasha's village, there are said to be four granaries of wheat, all of which has been stolen from the Christian peasantry. I am informed, on good authority, that among these villages there is something like £ T. 2,000 worth of this stolen wheat, which should, if the Government is in earnest, be seized and held for the benefit of the Christian population of the caza.

I took a recent opportunity to ask the Vali what he proposed to do to oust these Kurds in the spring, which is now close at hand. He informed me that he was in communication with the Sublime Porte, and that he would do his best to get the people back. Unfortunately, the power does not rest with him. The Kurds, emboldened by long impunity, are in this district quite out of hand, and are regarded as a menace by even the Turkish population.

Nothing practical can be done unless categorical orders are sent from Constantinople to clear these people out as soon as the snow has disappeared.

For this purpose the garrison of Arjisch should be increased to a battalion, which must remain there; two companies, as now, in the town, and the remainder by companies in the villages, for it would be nothing less than criminal to induce these poor people to come back and then to leave them to the mercy of these Kurds.

Should your Excellency see fit to bring this matter to the notice of the Sublime Porte, you would probably be met by the difficulty of finding the money necessary for the movement of even a battalion.

This money question is becoming terribly serious. There is no money at Van, and no prospect of any. It is all very well to remit the "bedliat," but its equivalent in cash should have been sent at the same time. Only a few days ago a number of officers' widows, who have drawn no pensions for months, practically stormed the Treasurer's Office. It is with the greatest difficulty that money is obtained to provide rations for the troops. This sort of thing cannot go on very much longer, and it is only the hope that your Excellency and your colleagues are engaged in elaborating a scheme of financial reform that keeps things going. Apart from the danger caused by this want of money, the local conditions are, in my opinion, favourable to reasonable tranquillity during the coming spring and summer, always provided that serious political complications at Constantinople are avoided.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 283.

STATEMENT showing present Condition of the Caza of Arjisch.

Name of Village.	Number Killed.	Number of Christian Families Remaining.	Remarks.
Espisinak	1	3	Occupied by Adamandi Kurds.
Harutian	18	Nil	Ditto.
Taikener Katchero ..	Nil	..	Derelict. Formerly fifty families on church land.
Al Kilisse	6	..	Occupied by Kurds.
Pirtak	30	2	Occupied by Kurds of Hadji Musa.
Penon	40	Nil	Derelict.
Asseraf	130	20	Emin Pasha living in village. Four large granaries of grain stolen from the Christian population.
Kaiasak	150	Nil	Hadji Temer Pasha living in village.
Kenapor Monastery ..	20	..	Occupied by Kurds.
Armizank	36	5	Ditto.
Zaisak	35	2	Occupied by Emin Pasha's brother, Haider Agha.
Tudgekh	25	10	Occupied by twelve families, Adamandi Kurds.
Herishat	1	Nil	Occupied by Telo Kurds.
Oraren	10	3	Mixed Turkish and Christian village.
Bedulanak	Nil	7	Ditto.
Hargen	4	All safe	Ditto.
Dilan	20	7	Occupied by Adamandi Kurds.
Madravank	40	Nil	Derelict. Out of only twenty families this number killed.
Majors	Nil	10	Village saved by a Kurd named Rasha.
Kurakilisse	18	Nil	Derelict.
Mooi	Nil	1	Mixed Kurd and Christian village. Formerly ten families, Christian.
Haizar	..	1	Ditto.
Town of Arjisch	45	All safe	Though few were killed, nearly all were plundered. Squadron of cavalry behaved very badly.

(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

Van, March 11, 1897.

No. 284.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 237.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, April 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis has reported to me that there are at present eighteen newly arrested Armenian political prisoners there. Of these, eleven came from the Caza of Akhlat, and were arrested for their connection with a local Hintchagist leader, who himself managed to escape the pursuit of the gendarmes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 285.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquiss of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 230.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 7, 1897*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 56 of the 26th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput respecting the seizure of cattle distributed by the Red Cross Society for the payment of taxes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 285.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Kharput, March 23, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1 of the 4th January last, reporting that a list of the Red Cross cattle alleged to have been seized in the Eghin villages by the tax collectors had been forwarded by the Vali to the Kaïmakam of Eghin, in order that a careful investigation might be made into the truth of the statements therein set forth, I now have the honour to report to your Excellency that Raouf Bey read to me, some days ago, the answer received by him from the official in question. Rehaat Effendi explained away each case mentioned upon the list by affirming that the sheep, goat, or ox referred to had been sold, given away, or otherwise disposed of by the owner, and that no animal had been seized for taxes.

The report of the Kaïmakam seemed to me so glaring a fabrication, that I asked for a copy of it; Raouf Bey appeared so unwilling, however, to accede to my request, that I refrained from pressing the matter, more especially as the documents bore the seals of the Armenian Koja Bashis of the various villages. These functionaries, I have since heard, were summoned to Eghin, and there received a reprimand from the authorities for allowing information to be imparted to the British Vice-Consul.

I beg herewith to inclose a further list of cattle distributed in the same district by the Red Cross Delegates, and confiscated by the Tahsildars last December in payment of taxes; the names of the villagers from whom the animals were taken are also specified therein.

I am preparing a Turkish translation of this list for presentation to the Vali, but I have very little hope of any satisfactory result ensuing from such inquiry as he may institute into the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 285.

List of Cattle taken in the District of Eghin.

Names of Villagers.	Goats.	Lambs.	Cows.	Oxen.	Villages.
Kevork Kurkdjian	..	..	1	..	Anchurty.
Margos Magloudjian	1	1	..	..	Dzak.
Der Bedros-kan Mattaos	1	..	..	..	"
Margosian Tavit	1	..	..	..	"
Zoravor Yeghia	..	..	..	1	"
Dosdig Jukar	1	..	..	..	"
Krammadian	2	..	..	..	"
Terzoyan Keghar	1	..	..	..	"
Yeram Hegbiné	1	..	..	..	"
Zoravor Hairabed	1	..	..	..	"
Der Arakelian Mogherditch	..	..	..	1	"
Papas Oghlou Pargham	4	..	..	..	Kou-han.
Ghedouk Keghiné	..	1	..	..	"
[illegible]	..	..	..	..	"
[illegible]	..	..	..	..	Ghaz-ova.
Kuburian Ovak	2	..	..	..	"
Ainajian Sora	1	..	..	..	"
Mouradzi Hovsun	..	..	1	..	"
Vartabedian Mikael	1	..	..	..	"
Mahmaz Garabed	..	..	..	1	"
Vartan Derderian	..	..	..	..	"
Vasa S ..	..	..	..	..	..
Tavrayan Cavidan ..	1	..	..	..	..
Ferouzan Mesrop	2	..	..	..	Gesek.
Ogul Oglou Ali	1	..	..	..	Aghein.
Khalo Mavo	1	..	..	..	Khoroch.
Kourkjian Ohannes	..	..	..	1	"
Garabed M	..	..	..	..	..
Dizdeg Oglou Pilav Dagha	3	..	..	..	"
Abdul Oglou Garabet	1	..	..	..	"
Rumparzoumian Bedashkian	1	..	..	..	"
Norsigian Kirkor	1	..	..	..	"

No. 286

Sir P. Currie to the Marquiss of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 240.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 8, 1897.*

ZIVER PASHA, Military Commandant of Marash, who was the instigator of the massacres in that town in 1895, and the author of the orders given to Colonel Mazhar Bey for the arrest and murder of Père Salvatore, has been transferred in a similar capacity to Jerusalem.

On the receipt of this news the French Embassy, who, together with the Russian, are more particularly interested in all that concerns the welfare of the Christian communities in Jerusalem, pointed out to the Porte the great danger entailed by the presence of such a man in that city. This warning, however, had no effect, and having recently received information of the departure of Ziver Pasha from Marash for Jerusalem, and of the bad effect produced among the Christian population of the latter place by the news of this appointment, the French Ambassador appealed to his colleagues to support him in the representations he proposed to make with a view to obtaining the recall of Ziver Pasha.

The Dragomans of the Six Embassies accordingly made a collective representation in this sense on the 6th instant, the Russian Dragoman being particularly urgent in his demands in view of the near approach of the Easter festival.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 287.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 241.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 8, 1897.*

IN my despatch No. 225 of the 1st April, I had the honour to report to your Lordship the number of victims in the massacre at Tokat and the neighbourhood, as telegraphed to me by Major Bulman.

I have now received from him a despatch, copy inclosed, giving further details of the incident; and I would beg your Lordship to correct certain errors in the names of the villages as they appear in my former despatch, owing to some inaccuracy in the ciphering or transmission of Major Bulman's telegrams.

Hakki Pasha, Military Commandant at Tokat, whose arrest and dismissal was demanded by the Six Embassies on the strength of the reports received from the French and British Vice-Consuls at Sivas, was, according to a statement of the Foreign Minister, placed under arrest; but I regret to see, from a telegram from Major Bulman dated the 6th April, that he was then under orders to proceed to Erzinjian.

As I have already informed your Lordship in my telegram No. 198 of the 6th April, the new Vali of Sivas, Hadji Hassan Pasha, is a man of bad antecedents, and has been actually tried and condemned by the Council of State for betrayal of trust, though the sentence was commuted by the Sultan.

He was, moreover, Vali of the Hedjaz at the time of the murder of the Consuls at Jeddah, although there is no proof of his having been responsible for that event.

The appointment was made directly by the Palace without the knowledge either of the Porte or of the new Board for Appointments in the Civil Service.

In view of his bad antecedents, and of the fact that his presence was likely to paralyze the efforts of Hassan Fehmy's Commission, the Ambassadors instructed their Dragomans to make representations at the Porte on the subject of Hadji Hassan's appointment, and to demand his recall from Sivas.

The Dragomans at the same time asked that the Mussulmans who had been arrested in connection with the disturbances at Ghemerek should be tried by the Special Commission sitting at Tokat, and not by the ordinary Tribunals.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 287.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 5.) *Tokat, March 31, 1897.*
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to furnish the following details of the disorders that took place at Tokat and in the neighbourhood on the 29th instant.

It seems to have been very generally apprehended that disorders might occur, and in consequence many of the Armenians did not open their shops. The others who had done so seeing this begin to close, and it is believed that this was the immediate cause of the outbreak, as the Turks, instead of waiting till noon, as it is believed was originally intended, immediately began to pillage. It was then about 9 A.M. The President of the Municipality had previously informed the Mutessarif that there was danger of an outbreak, and had demanded soldiers, which were refused. The patrols also which are usually sent out at an early hour had been delayed till some time after their usual hour. With one of these patrols was a Catholic policeman, who called on some groups of armed men to disperse, and asked some soldiers to take their arms from them. One of the soldiers replied, "We have no orders to disarm them or interfere with them in any way." One of the rioters then shot the policeman, but not mortally.

The Mutessarif had meanwhile been repeatedly informed that a riot had commenced. He took no precautions to prevent it, but went to the bazaar and ordered some of the Armenians who had closed their shops to open them, while within a short distance the shops were being pillaged and Armenians massacred. The Military Commandant also made no serious effort, but ordered an Armenian who had fired a revolver in defence of his house, but without wounding any one, to be killed. This was done by some soldiers. Another Armenian who had jumped from the same house and broken his leg was by his orders also killed. A Colonel of cavalry and some junior officers seem to have tried to arrest the disorders. The bulk of the Armenians were killed between 9 A.M. and 11 A.M., but shots were fired and the pillage continued till evening—89 Armenians were killed, 36 wounded, and about 250 houses pillaged. The small number is due to the fact that disorders were expected, and many in consequence were in hiding.

The village of Birkhundjik is a large Armenian village. The inhabitants had received warning of the intended attack, and all fled but three old men. These were killed and nine others who were found outside the village, and the houses were pillaged.

Bireiic is a Turkish village, with an Armenian monastery, and about ten Armenian houses. Here sixteen were killed, and the monastery and houses looted. Among the killed were two priests. I saw their corpses. Their eyes had been gouged out, their nose and ears cut, and one had been partially scalped. I am informed that these cruelties were perpetrated on them while still alive.

Vavuy, a Turkish village, with five or six Armenian houses. These were pillaged, and four Armenians killed.

Kuudji is a Turkish village with two Armenian houses. These houses were pillaged, and three Armenians killed.

From many parts of the provinces I have the same account that the Turks had gathered with intention to attack the Armenians, and then dispersed; but the very fact of their dispersing so easily proves that they would not have assembled without an intimation to do so.

I told the Vali, who is naturally anxious to minimize the facts, that a massacre had undoubtedly been organized, and that, bearing in mind the events of the last two years, it was open to suspicion that the massacre had been arranged in obedience to direct orders, and that any attempt on the part of the Commission to palliate the negligence of the authorities or hide the facts would confirm such suspicions.

He replied he would make every effort to facilitate the inquiries of the Commission, and I have no doubt that some of those who planned the massacre will be discovered without difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 288.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 242.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 8, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 127 of the 3rd April, stating, on the authority of Nubar Pasha, that a massacre was imminent at Hadjiri, I have already had the honour to inform your Lordship in my telegram No. 191 of the 3rd that news of the critical condition of affairs in that district had reached the French Embassy from their Vice-Consul at Mersina.

M. Cambon communicated to his colleagues a copy of the despatch which he had received on the subject, with the request that we should join him in the representations he proposed to make to the Sublime Porte.

The Dragomans of the Six Embassies accordingly called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and drew his Excellency's serious attention to the gravity of the situation at Hadjiri, and demanded the execution of the Sultan's promise for the immediate appointment of a Christian Kaimakam there, and the issue of instructions to the civil and military authorities to support him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 289.

Mr. Howard to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 35.)
My Lord, *The Hague, April 8, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a second notice has appeared in the Dutch papers, inserted at the request of the Turkish Minister at this Court, to the effect that, according to a despatch received by his Excellency from his Government of the 27th ultimo, the period for the return to Turkey of Armenians who left the same for abroad during the late troubles has been extended by two months.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY HOWARD.

No. 290.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 12.)

(No. 216.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 12, 1897, 12·10 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput:—

"Subject to your Excellency's approval I propose to go to Eghin. Things are quiet now in Kharput, but I have heard from a Khoja recently arrived from Eghin that women are still being outraged there, and that no less than eighty girls are with child. The authorities deny the truth of these statements. I have been told of other abuses there also. I propose to return through the Agun district, where I hear the villages are in an unsatisfactory condition, and Arabkir. This journey would require about ten days."

I have telegraphed my approval of this plan.

No. 291.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 14.)

(No. 222.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 14, 1897, 12·45 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Messina has telegraphed to me as follows:—

"I have finished the distribution of relief at Payas, and have now returned to my post. The Assistant Governor intends to remain at Payas, in the hope, as he says, of ameliorating the condition of the Christians. I will cooperate with the Vali with this view, and will not fail to keep your Excellency informed."

No. 292.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 14.)

(No. 224.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 14, 1897, 12·45 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis:—

"On the 6th March [? 6th April] some Kurds attacked and murdered the Governor of Modeki, together with two or three gendarmes.

"The Governor succeeded in shooting one of his assailants. It is supposed that his rigorous exaction of the sheep tax was the incentive to the crime. There is some excitement among the Kurds.

"Modeki, the scene of the murder, is about ten hours from here. It is expected that troops and gendarmes will be sent."

No. 293.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 230.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 17, 1897, 10·15 A.M.*

THE British Vice-Consul at Alexandretta informed me yesterday by telegraph that the French Consul is going to Payas to distribute relief, and that the French man-of-war "Forbin" has arrived, and will convey him.

No. 294.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 231.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 17, 1897, 12·30 P.M.*

MY telegram No. 216 of the 12th instant.

Mr. Fontana telegraphs to me that he intends to start for Eghin to-morrow.

No. 295.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 234.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 17, 1897, 3·15 P.M.*

I HEAR from Mr. Monahan, in reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 200 of the 6th April, that one or two battalions are expected at Mush; but that the reports about Talori, which Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum has heard, appear to be quite groundless.

No. 296.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 248.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, respecting the general condition of the vilayet, and the publication of a Proclamation for the maintenance of order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 296.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 30.)
Sir, *Angora, April 5, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that an official Proclamation, translation of the most important part of which I inclose herewith, has been published in the "Angora," the local journal of the vilayet, of the 30th ultimo, by order of the Governor-General, Tewfik Pasha, which, after conveying a caution to the police officials to refrain from giving offence or from exceeding their duty, enjoins upon the population generally the necessity of keeping the peace, stating that those who act otherwise will be at once arrested and punished according to law. The Proclamation in question has also

been posted up in the different quarters of the town, and copies, I understand, are to be distributed through the chief centres of the vilayet.

As I had the honour to report to your Excellency in my despatch No. 23 of the 16th ultimo, Angora and district had up to that date remained free from disturbance, nor since then have my accounts reached me of attempted aggression on the part of the Mussulmans. I should, therefore, be still able to report the situation as fairly satisfactory were it not the fact that, for the past fortnight or so, the attitude of the Mussulmans of the lower class has undoubtedly tended to become provocative and overbearing. Several cases of insult to Christians have been brought to my notice, which, though they can scarcely be called very serious in themselves, have, at a juncture such as the present, created an uneasy feeling among the Christian inhabitants, which has not been lessened by the recent events at Tokat. The Proclamation above referred to, therefore, which, it is understood, has been issued in pursuance of orders from Constantinople, is timely in so far as it tends to reassure the Christian part of the population as to the intention of the Government not to permit disorder, though its terms, it is felt, might have been more peremptory. I may add that, though the full details of the events at Tokat have not even yet reached Angora, no letters from that place having been received for two successive posts, the imprisonment of the officials immediately concerned in the disturbances has become known and has produced a good effect among the Christians.

As regards the situation at Cæsarea, I have been informed by a gentleman who recently arrived here from that place, that it is on the whole good, and that owing to the efforts of the Mutessarif, Ali Ani Bey, and the Commandant of the troops stationed there, confidence among the Christians was being gradually restored. This intelligence is the more satisfactory from the fact that my informant, who has been resident in that town for upwards of twelve years, is well qualified to form an opinion; and from the fact that, owing to the bad reputation which the Cæsarea Mussulmans have acquired for fanaticism and ill-will to the Christians, it is there if anywhere that disturbances may be expected.

In this connection my informant laid particular emphasis on an incident which had occurred at the beginning of the present year, and which, it appears, was as follows.

A preacher, belonging to the Protestant community, was returning from a tour in the villages surrounding Cæsarea when he was set upon and robbed by two Circassians. Before, however, the latter could make off with their booty two zaptiehs came upon the scene, and as the Circassians, on being summoned to surrender, for answer only fired on the zaptiehs, the latter promptly returned the fire, killing one of the robbers and fatally wounding the other.

This simple act of energy, my informant stated, produced a deep impression among the whole of the Christians of that district, and did more than anything else to the return of confidence to which I have referred above.

A good impression, moreover, my informant went on to say, had been created by the prompt and effective suppression of an attempt of the Mussulmans of Gheneresk (probably confounded in certain French newspapers with Everek), a large village just inside the borders of the Sivas Vilayet, to loot their Christian fellow villagers the day succeeding Bairam. My informant, nevertheless, added that since the order for mobilization a certain amount of anxiety had been again observable among the Christians of that district, due, however, in this case, he thought, rather to the prevailing uncertainty of the general outlook in the Empire than to local causes.

At Yuzgat, through which town he had also passed on his way to Angora, the mobilization, he informed me, had passed off without incident, very strict orders to avoid disturbance having been issued by the local authorities.

The above information, however, I should point out to your Excellency, refers to the situation at Cæsarea as it was some three or four weeks ago, and I am as yet ignorant of the effect which the news of the Tokat events may have had upon the Mussulmans of that district.

The Vali, Tewfik Pasha, has, however, informed me that he is in almost daily communication with the Cæsarea and Yuzgat authorities as regards the maintenance of order, and that the troops at their disposal are sufficient for that purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 296.

Extract from the "Angora" of March 30, 1897.

(Translation.)

ALL persons, no matter to what community they may belong, who shall venture to engage in seditious practices, or who, in disobedience to the orders of the Government, shall make use of arms either against one another or against the Executive Power, and thus give rise to disorder, will be subjected at once to an inquiry and punished according to law.

This being well known, all persons are hereby recommended and admonished to give no cause for the above contingency, to hold aloof from acts contrary to the law, both civil and religious, and to live in unity one with another, each occupying himself with his own affairs.

No. 297.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 249.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, inclosing a summary of an article which had appeared in a local Turkish newspaper condemning the disturbances at Tokat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 297.

Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 31.)

Sir, *Angora, April 7, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 30 of the 5th instant, inclosing an extract from a Proclamation published by the Angora authorities in the local journal of the vilayet of the 30th ultimo, enjoining upon the population the necessity of maintaining the peace, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith a summary of a further article in that journal of the same date severely condemning the recent disturbances at Tokat, and stating that strict orders had been issued to the authorities of all the vilayets in Asia Minor to maintain the peace in their respective districts.

The article in question has, I understand, appeared in most of the Constantinople journals, and its text, although marked non-official in the "Angora," was, I learn from a very good source, communicated to the authorities of this vilayet directly from the Palace.

As such it may fairly be taken as a statement embodying the intentions of the Government, and it is to be hoped, therefore, that it may be followed up by energetic action, and that any further attempts at disturbance will be promptly suppressed, or the state of things will become even worse than before.

I have, since my residence at Angora, had frequent opportunities of assuring myself that the Christians have lost all confidence in the sincerity of the Government, and this feeling will not be removed by mere official communications deploring disorder, however strongly worded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 297.

Summary of Article in the "Angora" of March 30, 1897.

(Translation.)

THE article, after referring to recent events at Tokat resulting in riots and to the sorrow which they had given to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, who had issued the most stringent orders to the authorities of the Sivas Vilayet for the suppression of these disturbances, for the maintenance of order, and the immediate arrest and delivery up to justice of the guilty parties, goes on to say that similar stringent instructions had been sent to the authorities both civil and military of all the vilayets in Asia Minor to direct their continual attention and efforts towards the preservation of peace and maintenance of order, reminding them, further, that the slightest neglect in this respect would entail upon them the heaviest responsibility, whatever their rank.

The article then concludes as follows; "Every effort will be made to arrest the authors of the outbreak at Tokat, which has excited the disgust of all the respectable inhabitants; the stolen property when found will be restored and the thieves severely punished. Further, the Mutessarif of the Sandjak, Mahmoud Nazim Pasha, the Commandant of the Gendarmerie, and the Police Commissary, have been dismissed and placed under arrest for not having taken the necessary steps to prevent this outbreak, of the possible occurrence of which information had been received. For the trial and punishment of these three, as well as of other officials, an extraordinary Tribunal has been formed, composed of Hassan Fehmi Pasha, Director-General of Customs, President; Shevki Bey, President of the Court of Appeal; Djelal Bey, President of the Criminal Court of Appeal; Malik Effendi, of the 'Chambre des Mises en Accusation;' Lieutenant-General Hassan Edib Pasha; Yanko Vitinios Effendi, formerly Conseiller in the Island of Crete; and Dilber Effendi, of the Commission of Reforms, and has left to-day, Tuesday, for Tokat.—March 12 (24), 1897."

No. 298.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 251.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 13, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Vice-Consul at Broussa reporting on the feeling existing among the Armenian population and the Vali's demand for the dismissal of the Kaimakam of Pazarkeui, who had been trying to incite bad feeling between the Mussulmans and Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 298.

Vice-Consul Gilbertson to Consul Eyres.

(No. 5. Consular.)

Sir, *Broussa, April 3, 1897.*

WHEN it became known that disturbances had occurred at Tokat, a feeling of uneasiness began to prevail amongst the Armenians here, but owing to the assurances given them by the Vali, their anxiety has been appeased.

It appears that the Kaimakam of Pazarkeui has been endeavouring to incite an ill-feeling between the Armenians and Mussulmans of that caza. This having been brought to the knowledge of the Governor-General, his Excellency has demanded that official's dismissal, and proposed that he should be replaced by Hilmi Effendi, present Kaimakam at Adrianoz, a young Turk, in whom he has great confidence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. GILBERTSON.

No. 299.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 252.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 13, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 151 of the 23rd March, I have the honour to forward to your lordship, herewith, copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, giving further details respecting the murder of Yusuf Yunar, the Relief Agent at Sert.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 299.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)

Sir, *Diarbekir, March 20, 1897.*

WITH regard to the murder of the Relief Agent at Sert, reported in my telegram of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum by Mr. Andrus, of Mardin, giving details, which I think, perhaps, Mr. Monahan may not have been able to obtain at Bitlis.

The impression is that there was an attempt to get up a general massacre the same morning—first day of Bairam—to distract attention from the robbery of relief money. An old Armenian priest was killed in the street, but further proceedings were checked by the energy of Colonel Salih Bey, the Military Commandant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 299.

Memorandum by Mr. Andrus.

An Account of the Murder of Khawaja Yusuf Yonan of Mardin at Sert, and the Robbery of Armenian Relief Funds.

(Compiled from letters of three parties detailing the tragedy.)

ON the morning of Saturday, the 6th March, 1897, between the hours of midnight and 4 o'clock, no less than six men—Moslems—entered the yard of the Protestant chapel at Sert, either from the roof of an adjacent house, or over a high wall separating it from a neighbour's yard. Khowaja Yusuf Yonan, of Mardin, our Agent, appointed through the aid of the British Embassy for the distribution of Armenian Relief Funds in the Sinjak of Sert, was occupying a room in the parsonage, which is in the same yard. These men evidently tried to force open the door of the room thus occupied, but only succeeded in startling Khowaja Yusuf, who called out: "Who is at the door? Who is at the door?" Either they then withdrew, or were quiet in their places for a time while, as one of the murderers afterwards confessed, he went to secure an iron crowbar; for Khowaja Yusuf seems not to have taken alarm, but to have again dropped off to sleep. When the crowbar was brought the door was forced open, and fell inward. The party walked over it and immediately attacked their victim, throwing his fur cloak over his head to confuse him and prevent his giving alarm. They dealt him no less than thirty-two blows with daggers, and yet the man breathed for more than an hour after they had finished their deed, and carried off the booty. He must have had between £ T. 400 and £ T. 500 at the time in the chest he had procured for locking up the funds. The week before the murder he had received from me by post a group of £ T. 250, and on the Thursday before the fatal Friday night he took out of the Post Office a group of £ T. 220, of which £ T. 20 were for other parties. He probably had some

funds still in hand from the last £ T. 500 sent him from Constantinople. But whatever the amount may have been it was all carried off. Khowaja Yusuf Yonan was alone the night he was murdered. We expressly charged him before we left Sert last fall not to sleep alone in his room; and sometimes he did arrange to have one or two spend the night with him, but oftener he was without anyone. Moreover, the members of the Relief Committee which I had selected to aid him in conducting the preparation of poor lists and distributing the funds, frequently advised him to have one or two stay with him at nights, and especially at times when he received additional funds for distribution, but he usually replied, "No, I am not afraid, and am alone sufficient." Pointing to his guns, revolver, and dagger, he would say, "For what do I have these? are they not sufficient?"

An old widow woman was occupying the adjoining room in the parsonage, and her testimony only elicited the following: "While I was sleeping I was awakened by hearing Khowaja Yusuf asking who was at the door. I went to sleep again but was awakened a second time by a noise proceeding from his room, which sounded like a pounding upon a table, but which I took to be the quarrelling of horses in the yard. (Khowaja Yusuf had purchased two horses to take back with him to Mardin.) Then, after a little while I heard a sound of groaning coming from Khowaja Yusuf's room, and upon this I immediately arose and went to learn the cause of it. When I came to him I found him prone on his stomach upon the floor of his room, and at a little remove from the door leading into the yard. I asked what ailed him, and he answered, 'They have plundered me and left me nothing.' He then asked me to raise him and put him upon his bed, as he could not raise himself. I told him I was an old woman, and could not lift him." This old woman then went and called the school teacher, who was asleep in the chapel, used also as a school-room, telling him that they had killed Khowaja Yusuf, and he must come and help her put him in his bed. This teacher, Thomas, testifies to the following:—

"I was awakened by a call under my window by Miriam, the old woman, saying, 'Get up, they have killed Khowaja Yusuf.' Upon hearing I feared, and my knees smote so together that I could not move, and was afraid to open the door lest there yet should be some one in the yard who might kill me also. I waited between a quarter and half an hour before calling Miriam to see if the yard-gate were open. She went and found it open, and also the fur cloak of Khowaja Yusuf dropped by the side of it. She fastened the gate and brought in the cloak. We then together went into his room. I raised him from his prone position and placed him on his bed. I feared to remain long with him, and only asked him, 'How are you?' He replied, 'O, Jesus.' Miriam then asked him, and he answered, 'They have left nothing. They have plundered me.' Deep groanings marked his breathing. I then returned to the school and locked the door. It was then about 9 o'clock Turkish. Miriam remained by his side, and about half an hour later I heard her raise the cry, 'He is dead, he is dead.'"

About daybreak word of the tragedy was sent to the members of the Relief Committee. After these had assembled in Khowaja Yusuf's room, and taken note of things, they sent word to the proper authorities, who at once responded, and with the City Physician, made the usual examination of the body for a report, and took the testimony of Miriam, the old widow woman, and of the school teacher.

The doctor who examined him and others who saw him said that Khowaja Yusuf must have had a weapon with which he struck at the robbers, and for that reason they cut him up so fearfully. The Relief Committee report that there were indications that when the robbers entered he had not opportunity to fire a shot, as they attacked suddenly, and he had only a belt knife, and blood was found upon the money-chest. Four of the wounds were in his bowels, and fatty matter protruded from them. His right hand was cut down to the bone. Down to the time when he was borne to the grave blood flowed from his wounds. While the officials were still engaged in taking testimony over the body of Khowaja Yusuf, and between the hours of 3 and 6 o'clock Turkish, word was brought to them that a Gregorian Armenian priest, Hohannés by name, and eighty-four years old, had just been slaughtered in the street, as he was leaving the house of the Nakib-ul-Eshraf, where he had been making a Bairam call. The officials appeared horrified, but before they could move in the matter the Commandant appeared in their midst, having himself been at the house of the Nakib-ul-Eshraf, and conversed with the aged priest whom he found there, and then, upon coming out, seen the old man's body in the street, with his head almost severed from his body, and one ear cut off.

The Commandant took matters in hand that day, and immediately distributed patrols throughout the city, with orders to arrest every suspicious character they found. More than forty were arrested, and the Christians were in greater fear of the Moslems, owing to the murder of Khowaja Yusuf and Priest Hohannés, than during the events of a year ago last fall. A certain Sert Moslem started for Mecca during Ramazan, and before leaving was heard to remark, "I shall reach Aleppo for the feast, and while I am there there will be a massacre in Sert." For four days after these murders Christians scarcely dared to go to church, or to market. On the eighth day after these deeds were committed six of the murderers of Khowaja Yusuf, and some concerned in the slaughter of Priest Hohannés confessed to having murdered these men. These confessions were not made save through the energy of this vigilant and efficient military Commandant, Salih Bey, who when he saw that the ordinary processes of the Courts were failing to elicit anything from the prisoners, instituted military investigations at the barracks, and used the bastinado. They not only confessed to the deed, but also showed where some of Khowaja Yusuf's personal effects had been hidden, and in the Commandant's presence two guns, a revolver, and a dagger of Khowaja Yusuf's were fished out of a well into which they had been thrown by two of the murderers. The names of the murderers who have confessed are these:—

(1.) Abd Allah Nisli.
(2. and 3.) Hamid and Yusuf, sons of Abd Allah Khâfó.
(4.) Moustafa, son of Hamid-el-Adâje.
(5.) Tohi, son of Hósso Habib.
(6.) Addo, son of Meerzók-el-Nakâje.

They are all Moslems.

It is said that the Commandant is proposing to brand with a hot iron those who have not confessed, in order to make them disclose and produce the funds they carried off.

The Government have also appointed a Committee to work with our Relief Committee over relief accounts, in order to ascertain the amount of money taken by the murderers and robbers.

We hope to shortly receive a report from this Committee.

(Signed) A. N. ANDRUS,
American Missionary.

American Mission, Mardin, Turkey-in-Asia,
[undated].

No. 300.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 253.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 14, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to draw your Lordship's attention to the inclosed despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting the resignation of several Armenians who had been enrolled in the local police force. According to Mr. Fontana, they find that, as officers, they cannot command obedience, and that, as subordinates, they receive ill-treatment and no pay.

It must, I fear, be admitted that the massacres have rendered it impossible to execute many of the reforms provided for in the scheme of 1895. The constant spectacle of the full liberty allowed to Moslems of every class to kill, plunder, insult, and maltreat Christians with impunity, renders it difficult and dangerous for the latter to occupy any position in which they may be called upon to exert the least authority or restraint upon Turks. I am reluctantly led to the conclusion that at present the appointment of Christian officials is advisable only in purely Christian districts, and that, wherever the population is mixed, such nominations are likely to do more harm than good.

I propose to send copies of Mr. Fontana's despatch to the Vice-Consuls in the other vilâyets to which the scheme of reforms originally applied, and to ask their opinion on the points to which it refers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 300.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 19.) *Kharput, March* 30, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that among the Armenians lately enrolled in the police force of this vilayet the following have already resigned their appointments owing to their receiving no pay, and, in some instances, to ill-treatment:—

Koshish Oglou Garabet.
Hussenikli Mugherditch.
Arabkirli Avedis.
Gounush Madenli Hovsep.
Kharputlu Vartan.
Malatiali Kevork (at Eghin).

Koshish Oglou Garabet was beaten, he informs me, by a Sergeant, who refused, moreover, to allow him to go to church, and constantly called him "ghiaour."*

Many other Christian zaptiehs are intending, it seems, to quit the service, although such action is not unlikely to draw upon them the displeasure of the local authorities.

A third Commissaire at Mezreh, named Gabriel Effendi, informs me that the Mussulmans of the patrol under his command refuse, when on night duty, to obey his orders. They lounge into such cafés as may happen to be open, and leave him outside remonstrating.

I have talked to the Vali about the unsatisfactory relations existing between the Christian and Moslem members of the police force; but it is difficult—in the face of the fact that the great majority of Turks have harboured since the disturbances a steady dislike and contempt for the Armenians in general—to suggest any radical means for the improvement of those relations. From the little that I have seen since my arrival at Kharput, I cannot but believe that the nomination of Armenians to posts under the Turkish Government is at present worse than useless as far as this province is concerned, and is likely to prejudice rather than advance the interests of the Armenian population. An Armenian official, gendarme, or policeman who endeavours to do his duty conscientiously, is sure to meet with reprimand or abuse, if not with worse. If, on the other hand, he merely seeks the approval of his Turkish colleagues, comrades, or superiors, he must act blindly as they wish him to act, and must agree with them in everything, in which case he incurs their redoubled contempt as well as the resentment of his own co-religionists, so that his position is any way untenable.

Had no outbreak ensued upon the acceptation of the scheme of reforms, the organization of a mixed police and gendarmerie would have produced, no doubt, very excellent results; but to-day the state of things is such, I would submit, as to preclude the possibility of such an organization being of any practical use.

At Khozat, the chief town of the Dersim Sandjak, no Christians have as yet applied, the Vali tells me, for enrolment in the gendarmerie; and at Maden very few have enlisted so far.

Neither Christian nor Moslem police or gendarmes have received their pay for months past, but "bayin," or rations, are served out to both alike.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 301.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 251.) *Constantinople, April* 14, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 229 of the 5th instant, respecting the reported appointment of Hakki Effendi, ex-Kaïmakam of Eghin, to the post of Professor at the "Idadie" School at Kharput, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a telegram which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, to whom I had communicated the substance of the foreign Minister's remarks on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* Infidel.

Inclosure in No. 301.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(Telegraphic.) *Kharput, April* 11, 1897.

THE proposed nomination was common talk here, and I heard it from the Vali's assistant among others. Upon your Excellency's representations a telegram was received, I hear, prohibiting it. Hakki Effendi is afraid, I hear, lest the Tokat Commission should proceed to Eghin. It would be well if they did, and this notorious criminal were punished however insufficiently.

No. 302.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 255.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 14, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a translation of a Report dealing with the present critical state of affairs in Turkey, presented by Ismail Kemal Bey to the Sultan on the 24th February, and published in the "Temps" of the 8th instant. I also inclose copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block, commenting on the effect produced in Turkish circles by the publication of this document, and reporting a conversation which he has lately had with Ismail Kemal Bey on on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 302.

Extract from the "Temps" of April 8, 1897.

LES CAHIERS DE LA TURQUIE.

NOS lecteurs n'ont pas oublié l'émotion produite, à Constantinople, par la remise au Sultan, à la fin du mois de Février dernier, du Mémoire rédigé par Ismaïl Kémal Bey, Ancien Gouverneur-Général de Tripoli.

Ce qui faisait l'importance de ce document, c'est qu'il n'émane pas du parti Jeune-Turc ni d'un homme qui puisse être suspect de tendances révolutionnaires à un degré quelconque, mais d'un haut fonctionnaire jusqu'ici connu pour sa fidélité au Sultan et ses principes de loyalisme. Ce Mémoire est rédigé à la façon Orientale, c'est-à-dire en termes faits pour surprendre les Occidentaux par le mélange, la juxtaposition et le contraste de formules d'une flatterie presque écœurante et de critiques d'une rigueur impitoyable. L'intérêt de cette espèce de compte rendu l'État de l'Empire Ottoman est double. C'est d'abord comme le fameux Rapport de Necker en 1782 le premier aveu officiel, le premier exposé fait du dedans de la décadence de la Turquie et de ses causes. C'est ensuite, en quelque mesure, le premier fascicule des cahiers où le peuple Turc—nous entendons les Musulmans croyants et les sujets fidèles du Khalife—exposé et exposera ses doléances, ses aspirations, ses revendications et, bientôt peut-être, ses exigences. On ne saurait trop attirer l'attention du public Européen sur cette manifestation, d'autant plus importante que l'impunité dont a joui jusqu'ici son auteur semble attester la crainte de la part du Sultan de rompre en visière à une opinion trop puissante. Encore une fois, il ne s'agit pas d'un cri de douleur ou de colère Arménien, ni d'un pamphlet Jeune-Turc; c'est un avertissement quasi officiel donné au Commandeur des Croyants, au Vicaire du Prophète, à l'ombre d'Allah sur la terre, par l'un de ses hauts fonctionnaires d'hier et des fidèles sujets d'aujourd'hui.

Rapport adressé à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan par Ismaïl Kémal Bey, Ancien Gouverneur-Général de Tripoli, daté du 12 (24) *Février*, 1312 (1897).

Votre Majesté Impériale voudra bien se rappeler que, lors de mon retour de Beyrouth, je lui ai présenté un long Rapport, dans lequel je démontrais clairement que la politique adoptée dans les relations avec les Puissances étrangères et dans l'administration intérieure conduirait le Gouvernement et le pays à de grands dangers.

L'Isolement de la Turquie.

Je faisais remarquer que les mystérieux procédés et le silence des Grandes Puissances, représentés à votre Majesté par de complaisants serviteurs comme un succès de sa politique, sont, au contraire, une grande calamité, tenant le Gouvernement Ottoman aussi complètement isolé que s'il voulait se suicider.

Je démontrais de la façon la plus claire que la mauvaise administration qui domine dans les provinces de l'Empire, dessèche le sang du Gouvernement et de vos sujets de toutes les classes.

Le point le plus important de ce Rapport était la question d'Égypte qui, plus que toute autre, doit occuper les pensées de votre Majesté, car l'Égypte est la source des droits saints du Khalife de l'Islam qui donnent au Sultanat Ottoman sa force sacrée et son pouvoir moral sur les nations intéressées dans les affaires de l'Orient.

Votre Majesté m'ayant commandé de lui soumettre les divers moyens de régler cette question, en même temps que mes propres observations, j'ai, d'après cela, exposé dans de nombreux Rapports et Mémoranda les moyens politiques et les mesures capables d'assurer un règlement en rapport avec les conditions divines qui ont créé la question, conformes aussi aux droits sacrés et aux intérêts spéciaux du Gouvernement Ottoman.

Bien que mes recommandations et mes suggestions aient alors attiré l'attention de votre Majesté, bien qu'elles fussent faites au moment où les autres intéressés dans la question Égyptienne montraient les meilleures dispositions pour adopter une politique de conciliation pour une cause ou pour une autre, les propositions tendant au règlement de la question d'Égypte et les autres points signalés par moi, cessèrent d'occuper votre attention et tombèrent dans l'oubli ; ainsi trois ou quatre années de temps précieux ont été perdues.

Quand les mauvais résultats de l'administration et les troubles de l'intérieur, produits par la corruption dans laquelle toutes les classes des représentants du Gouvernement sont tombés, éclatèrent, provoquant un mouvement général de pitié dans le monde civilisé et amenant l'intervention des Grandes Puissances, les malheurs prédits commencèrent à se produire. Alors je donnai loyalement à comprendre à votre Majesté que le plus sacré des devoirs et la plus sûre des politiques pour un Souverain clairvoyant et aimant son peuple était d'aller au devant des prières et des griefs de ses sujets, d'élargir leur sphère de liberté de pensée et d'action, de concilier leurs droits et leurs intérêts contradictoires et d'augmenter dans une juste mesure, en accord avec leurs capacités et les exigences du moment, leur droit d'intervenir dans le Gouvernement du pays.

L'Action des Puissances.

J'attire aussi l'attention de votre Majesté sur la nature exacte du Rapport préparé par les Ambassadeurs des trois Puissances, contenant leurs décisions confidentielles et concernant les réformes dans les vilayets où les Arméniens forment une portion considérable de la population, avant que ces reformés fussent présentées au Gouvernement, et je signalai dans le plus pressant langage la nécessité d'exécuter (le plus rapidement) immédiatement, au lieu des reformés spéciales qui allaient nous être imposées, des réformes sérieuses et générales pouvant profiter à tous sujets de votre Majesté. Je démontrais que, prévenant les Ambassadeurs, vous détourneriez toute intervention étrangère et gagneriez le contentement et l'affection des sujets Ottomans de toutes classes.

Ces recommandations et considérations toutes personnelles furent défavorablement accueillies par votre Majesté. En somme, on les considéra comme de traîtres artifices et non comme les informations et les suggestions d'un fidèle serviteur dont l'opinion et le jugement méritent la confiance du Souverain.

En fait, il fut supposé que tout ceci était un subterfuge suggéré par quelque autre source en vue de poursuivre des desseins et des aspirations politiques, mais comme ma réputation de loyauté de cœur et de fermeté d'opinion était établie de façon à ne pas être facilement ébranlée par les misérables insinuations d'une bande de "wretches," qui trompent votre Majesté, comme je savais que la justesse de mes informations ressortait des événements, je ne me déconcertai nullement et la droiture de mon jugement ne fut pas affaiblie, mais je regrettai qu'on ne retirât aucun avantage d'une occasion qui ne se représenterait probablement pas.

Votre Majesté admet maintenant sans doute que la fermeté de mon insistance et de ma résolution (qui a atteint le comble de l'audace) en étalant devant ses yeux la vraie situation et le résultat de mon loyal désir d'atteindre les moyens qui peuvent assurer la sauvegarde de votre Majesté et celle de son Empire.

Le cœur de votre Majesté est maintenant persuadé, j'en suis certain, que, si les réformes dont la nécessité est maintenant évidente avaient été dès lors accomplies en toute conscience et sincérité, l'indépendance de votre Empire n'aurait pas été menacée et vos provinces n'auraient pas offert le spectacle d'une maison de meurtre et de pillage.

Le Padischah et le Bien de l'Empire.

Je prie votre Majesté de ne pas croire que cette dissertation sur les événements de l'année dernière et cette récapitulation de mes recommandations aient pour but de me mettre en opposition avec elle. Je suis sûr que votre Majesté, comme Padischah de cette terre et de cet Empire, et comme père de tous les Ottomans, n'a d'autre désir que le contentement et la prospérité de ses sujets, le bonheur et la gloire du pays et du Gouvernement. Mais ceci est aussi hors de doute que, malgré l'intention de votre Majesté de faire le bonheur de son peuple, l'application et l'exécution de ses projets, aussi sages qu'ils puissent être, n'en restent pas moins décourageantes pour vos sujets et des plus attristantes pour vos fidèles serviteurs.

Si les Traités, les Lois, et les Règlements promulgués durant les vingt années de règne de votre Majesté, étaient réunis, ils formeraient une compilation complète contenant tous les problèmes de Gouvernement qui peuvent être trouvés dans les Lois les plus embrouillées de l'art de l'administration et comprendraient tous les travaux sur la science du Gouvernement.

Malheureusement, ces Traités ont été si bien entourés de conditions et de précautions, et la rédaction de leurs clauses a été confiée à des agents si incapables que les bonnes intentions de votre Majesté sont restées lettre morte et que le pays est resté en état d'infériorité.

Déjà, avant votre avènement, la gloire et le renom de votre Majesté étaient bien connus des cœurs de vos sujets. Le contenu du Hatti-Humayoun publié immédiatement avant votre avènement, était regardé par toutes les classes, hautes et basses, comme un gage spécial de salut, et l'avènement de votre Majesté Impériale fut considéré comme le début d'une ère de splendeur et de gloire pour le peuple Ottoman et le Gouvernement Impérial.

La Constitution et le Hatti-Humayoun acceptant et promulguant les mêmes Lois étaient une preuve que vous appréciez justement les malheurs et les torts d'un Gouvernement arbitraire, les bénéfices et les vertus d'un régime constitutionnel. Cela prouvait aussi que, bien que même dans les pays civilisés, les droits de la liberté et du Gouvernement constitutionnel avaient été acquis au dépens de révolutions sanglantes, les sujets de votre Majesté, grâce à son jugement éclairé et à sa immense perspicacité n'auraient pas besoin de recourir à de pareilles mesures pour obtenir les mêmes avantages. C'était encore un signe démontrant que votre Majesté était justement élue pour acquérir le renom et la gloire d'un des plus vertueux maîtres du monde.

Les débuts d'Abdul Hamid.

Cette période du commencement de votre règne, qui obtint l'approbation universelle du monde et les sentiments d'adoration de toutes les classes du peuple Ottoman, fut la cause des plus brillantes espérances pour la gloire et l'avenir de l'Empire. L'état actuel démontre que les années suivantes furent désastreuses.

Lorsque vos descendants et successeurs compareront les résultats définitifs et contradictoires de l'époque actuelle avec les glorieux débuts de votre règne; lorsqu'ils critiqueront et apprécieront les causes mystérieuses des tristes difficultés qui, durant les vingt dernières années, ont accablé le Gouvernement et le peuple, ils ne pourront trouver d'expression suffisamment forte pour maudire ceux de vos contemporains qui ont causé cet état de choses en sacrifiant la gloire et la dignité de votre Majesté et les intérêts sacrés de l'État dans le seul but d'augmenter leur fortune privée et de préserver leur gloire personnelle.

Ils considèrent comme une distinction d'achever de se nuire mutuellement par toutes sortes de calomnies essayant ainsi d'attirer l'attention de votre Majesté. La

dégradation du journal d'espionnage tenu contre un père, un fils, contre un frère, est considérée comme un acte honorable.

Aussi la corruption du peuple a-t-elle atteint un tel degré et pénétré d'une telle façon les plus hautes classes que le pays est privé d'une administration centrale nécessaire à sa protection et à celle des droits de votre trône et de votre Gouvernement. Il est aussi privé d'une administration honnête qui avancerait les affaires de vos sujets.

L'obéissance et la discipline des soldats dont le devoir est de résister aux attaques de l'ennemi, est entamée, tandis que la force de la marine est réduite à rien et que l'Arsenal est devenu une source de revenus privés. Quant aux finances, non seulement elles sont entièrement ruinées; mais de plus dans un état si critique qu'on ne peut le concevoir.

D'un côté, le peuple opprimé et souffrant à cause des récents désordres, est incapable de payer ses taxes; de l'autre, les classes qui n'ont pas été atteintes par la crise politique sont obligées d'attendre l'issue des complications et de remettre le payement de leurs créances.

La situation dépeinte ci-dessus suffirait à ruiner la plus puissante contrée, mais la menace simultanée de deux révolutions qui donneraient le coup mortel à l'État, cause encore la plus grande anxiété aux sujets dévoués de votre Majesté.

Les deux Révolutions.

Votre Majesté sait qu'il y a dans ce monde deux sortes de révolutions. L'une consiste dans la levée en armes contre le Gouvernement d'une multitude irréfléchie, incapable de se rendre compte des résultats de sa sauvagerie qui ne pèse ni ne considère la force des moyens qu'elle emploie. L'autre provient d'une indignation générale produite par l'oppression ruineuse d'une époque de fausseté et de mauvaises passions qui tendent à être une barrière aux progrès de l'humanité. Elle vient aussi du désir de réagir contre une force du Gouvernement dirigée vers l'acquisition de prérogatives injustes et entêtée à conserver des notions fausses qui ont perdu leur force et ont fait leur temps.

Les causes de la première de ses révolutions sont à chercher dans l'état actuel des choses en Anatolie, en Crète, et en Roumélie, et les causes de la seconde sont chez ceux qui contrôlent actuellement l'administration du pays. Une révolution peut prendre place dans n'importe qu'elle partie des possessions Ottomanes. Ses raisons, sa nature, et les moyens de l'effectuer sont connus et compris.

Au lieu de faire à temps ce qui aurait été conforme à la justice et à la sagesse, tout en prenant en considération les besoins du peuple et les exigences de l'époque, au lieu de fortifier les droits du trône en tranquillisant les cœurs de ses sujets, on a laissé les désirs les plus raisonnables, les prières les plus simples, sans réponse. Les pétitionnaires devinrent le but de toutes sortes d'oppressions, de toutes sortes de vexations. Ce fut le moyen de soulever la question.

Les fautes ainsi commises sont si nombreuses et si souvent répétées qu'elles doivent être attribuées, soit à une duperie volontaire, ce qui ne peut être, soit à l'ignorance, à l'erreur, même à la trahison. L'angoisse du futur, jointe (à la pauvreté) aux difficultés de la pauvreté et du besoin général, ont mis toutes les classes de vos sujets dans un état d'inquiétude; comme il était impossible de recouvrer les taxes du Gouvernement, on a eu recours à une contribution monétaire, appelée "aide pour l'organisation militaire" et dans beaucoup d'endroits des mesures coercitives ont été prises à ce propos.

Peut-on considérer comme un sujet loyal qui, comprenant les effets actuels et la gravité future de la crise soufferte par l'Empire et le pays si attachés à leur Souverain, aurait, dans un pareil moment, suggéré une mesure propre à faire naître l'idée qu'il deviendrait nécessaire d'entrer en lutte avec les Six Puissances et de jeter ainsi dans le trouble un peuple déjà las des maux de la guerre. Cette mesure ne devait-elle pas sembler à l'extérieur une excitation des Musulmans contre les Chrétiens?

Le Sultan, qui sait tout, ne sait rien.

Majesté, mon Seigneur, vous qui connaissez chaque querelle entre mari et femme dans les plus modestes intérieurs, vous montrez que vous ignorez les dangers qui menacent aujourd'hui l'avenir de votre Majesté et la vie de l'Empire.

En refusant de considérer avec faveur et confiance les sentiments loyaux et soumis d'une grande nation où les services fidèles des nombreux grands hommes de cette race glorieuse, vous vous êtes fait l'instrument des idées fausses d'une bande de misérables fripons.

Votre gloire Impériale et votre renom ont été déshonorés par des vices, résultats déplorables de la corruption et de la faiblesse.

L'Administration Ottomane a acquis aux yeux du monde la réputation d'un modèle d'oppression et d'iniquité. Votre Majesté Impériale qui n'a jamais consenti à répandre le sang du plus abject meurtrier, est considérée aujourd'hui et généralement désignée à travers le monde comme le sanglant Padischah. Le thème principal des colonnes de la presse étrangère est la critique et le blâme des actes de votre Majesté.

Les hommes les plus sages et les plus cultivés de l'Europe, les écrivains politiques et les hommes d'État, dans leurs réunions privées, discutent les affaires de l'Orient sur un ton qui suffit à exciter la conscience publique; ils blâment les actes de votre Majesté à un degré qui surpasse tout mode d'expression.

Je ne vois pas la nécessité d'expliquer ni de définir à quel point la continuité de ce triste système a provoqué le dégoût général du monde civilisé. Sa valeur, dont les résultats ont fait la preuve, finira par affaiblir le pouvoir d'un grand Souverain comme votre Majesté Impériale, nécessairement doué des plus grandes vertus par sa race et ses origines et doué aussi de l'inspiration divine. Je ne démontrerai pas non plus combien ce système lera de mal à l'Empire Ottoman. Pour mettre fin à cet état de choses, les Grandes Puissances sont obligées de choisir entre deux moyens: diviser les possessions Ottomanes ou réformer l'Administration Ottomane.

Le premier moyen ne semblait pas praticable, grâce aux transformations que l'équilibre Européen a subies durant le dernier quart du siècle et à la véritable honnêteté d'intention montrée par les Grandes Puissances qui, tout en montrant—poursuivant—leurs intérêts politiques, ont voix décisive dans les affaires d'Europe. Le second moyen fut adopté comme pouvant seul dissiper les difficultés présentes, et sur ce point on obtint un accord complet.

Le Concert Européen.

En ce qui concerne la solidité et les résultats de ce concert, je ne perds pas de vue que plus d'un voudrait tromper votre Majesté en émettant des doutes sur la sincérité de cet accord. Il n'est pas impossible que ceux qui professent cette opinion y ajoutent des arguments prouvant la perspicacité de leur jugement, mais ces arguments et ces insinuations ne méritent pas d'être discutés, car on ne peut envisager à l'époque actuelle cette hypothèse d'une des Grandes Puissances entreprenant une action isolée qui porterait préjudice à ses intérêts particuliers. Votre Majesté n'ignore pas qu'au point de vue de leurs intérêts individuels en Orient, les trois Puissances peuvent être divisées en trois classes.

Dans la première rentrent les Puissances guidées par leurs intérêts nationaux de désirer la régénération et la consolidation de l'Empire Ottoman; la pierre angulaire de l'équilibre européen; leur meilleure garantie de conservation et d'augmentation de pouvoirs acquis.

La seconde classe espère atteindre le sommet du développement national et la position de Puissance dominante, dirigeant des possessions grandes comme le monde, à travers la destruction de la Turquie, et acquérant ses provinces privilégiées, tandis que la troisième est obligée de chercher le maintien du *statu quo*.

Elles y sont contraintes par leur position géographique, par leur faible degré d'influence qui les empêcherait de profiter du partage de l'Empire Ottoman, et la crainte que leur présent développement du pouvoir ne soit entravé par les autres États comme un cataclysme et ne menace leur existence future.

Dans ces conditions, on ne peut imaginer qu'une Puissance n'ayant pas d'intérêt sincère au maintien du concert Européen finisse cependant d'y rester attachée dans le but de l'utiliser pour l'accomplissement de ses desseins politiques et de ses intérêts individuels, qu'elle cherche aussi à développer cette science politique qui la rend apte à accomplir sa destinée et qu'elle compte dans le temps pour l'accomplissement de ses projets, tout en encourageant notre pays dans un entêtement obstiné à quitter le droit chemin dicté par la sage politique de vos glorieux prédécesseurs et leurs célèbres hommes d'État, poursuivie par eux durant

un siècle et sur laquelle toute l'énergie et les efforts du Gouvernement Ottoman devraient être concentrés. Cette Puissance, tout en profitant de nos fautes répétées et de nos récents et universels désordres, n'a pas l'intention de porter préjudice à sa position et à son influence sur les affaires du monde et particulièrement sur la politique d'Orient, ni d'oublier les leçons tirées des Traités de Unkiar-Skélessi, en cherchant de prompts et immédiats avantages.

Si, en face de la réalité de ce concert qui peut concilier les divers intérêts des Grandes Puissances, il était possible d'apercevoir, venant de l'une d'entre elles, le désir d'y introduire la discorde, ce qui est, du reste, impossible—un tel désir serait considéré non comme un acte bénévole de bienveillance, mais comme une intrigue méprisable. Car le Gouvernement Ottoman, pour arriver à donner aux Grandes Puissances et au monde civilisé la satisfaction qu'il lui doit, pour rassurer ses propres sujets et dissiper l'excitation de l'opinion publique à l'extérieur, est contraint de mener à bien des réformes radicales garantissant son abandon de la fatale politique poursuivie jusqu'à présent, politique dont la nature néfaste se manifeste par ses résultats.

Les Réformes.

En ce qui concerne les réformes projetées, quels que soient le texte et le sens du projet que les Ambassadeurs ont construit et présenté à l'approbation de leurs Gouvernements, il est possible, après quelques réflexions, d'en deviner les clauses principales.

Vos prédécesseurs Impériaux étaient accoutumés à mettre aux premières places les hommes les plus capables de leur époque, doués d'une haute érudition et de qualités intellectuelles, afin de découvrir toujours la meilleure politique, de preciser et de faire ressortir les vertus du pouvoir et de se débarrasser de la dissimulation et de la timidité engendrées par ce pouvoir. Ces prédécesseurs, en adaptant les efforts et les actes du Gouvernement aux nécessités du moment actuel, étaient toujours en position de défendre l'honneur et l'influence de leurs Ministres, chaque fois qu'un trouble extérieur s'élevait, amenant l'intervention et la pression étrangères. Alors ces Ministres capables et honnêtes inclinaient vers le parti loyal de réformer le pays, et, tout en gagnant la complète confiance de l'Europe, poursuivaient sans cesse une politique conduisant au développement de la puissance de la Turquie et ils assuraient ainsi la prospérité ainsi que celle du peuple.

Maintenant, par contre, vous paraissez être attiré vers ceux qui n'ont ni force, ni dignité; vous leur confiez les rênes du Gouvernement et vous leur laissez la direction de vos conseils privés. Aujourd'hui on distingue surtout l'ignorance et la bassesse. La force du jugement et les vertus naturelles ont perdu toute considération. Et, grâce à vos conseillers, l'État a été engagé dans toutes sortes de difficultés, la puissance de votre trône est menacée et la personne de votre Majesté est devenue le but des attaques du monde entier.

L'amour des places et le désir de l'avancement ont causé le dégoût et la colère des plus intelligents de la jeune génération et de beaucoup de conseillers expérimentés, tout cela a amené leur exil et leur fuite.

Le caractère méprisable des gens en faveur montre que l'administration du pays a été remise aux mains d'hommes incapables, tandis que les actions honorables des gens en disgrâce montrent assez clairement que la race Ottomane a droit à une loyale et saine administration conforme aux progrès de l'époque, et qu'elle contient assez d'éléments vitaux pour la créer.

Étant donné cet état de choses ainsi fidèlement depeint et si clair pour chacun, les bases des réformes adoptées et proposées par les Puissances consistent à confier l'administration aux hommes les mieux placés pour le bien comprendre et à faire concéder au peuple le droit d'intervenir dans cette administration.

Si raisonnables, si acceptables que puissent être ces bases de réforme, leur résultat sera, en tout cas, une diminution de l'indépendance du Souverain et du pouvoir absolu du Gouvernement. Ceux de vos sujets qui sont pénétrés d'un patriotisme sincère sont forcés d'en appeler aux inspirations divines du cœur de votre Majesté Impériale pour en obtenir quelque mesure de soulagement.

Pas une faute à commettre, pas une heure à perdre.

Il ne reste plus qu'un temps bien court; pas un moment n'est à perdre; il faut chercher sans retard des mesures temporaires à appliquer comme remèdes

locaux, et perdre ce temps précieux c'est risquer d'empoisonner tous les Corps de l'État. La récente question de Crète en est un exemple offert à nos yeux. Il est certain que, si des efforts pour trouver un remède radical et immédiat ne sont pas faits de la plus sérieuse façon, la flamme de la révolution jaillira, dans toutes les directions et rien ne pourra l'éteindre. Aussi le seul remède est de confier la gloire de votre Majesté, la gloire de votre Empire et son avenir à l'appui des peuples, plus forte que n'importe quelle armée, plus solide qu'aucune forteresse, de refondre la forme de l'administration, de modifier les relations avec les Puissances étrangères, de façon à prouver que vous avez apprécié la gloire d'être admis dans le concert des Puissances Occidentales.

De fait, votre Majesté possède, en action et en énergie, la plus parfaite vigueur mentale; elle pourrait être appelée divine: vous avez montré une persévérance surprenante en revisant toutes les affaires du Gouvernement de la nation, aussi bien les petites que les grandes. Cependant, au lieu de résultats fructueux, l'ordre et la bonne organisation ont été détruits. Un Sultan qui n'en appelle pas à l'assistance et la coopération de ses sujets, ne peut réussir dans ses efforts. Il n'est pas nécessaire de remonter à une époque lointaine de l'histoire. Jetons un regard sur le début de la période de régénération de la nation. Votre grand-père et votre père furent vraiment les régénérateurs et les rénovateurs de l'Empire. L'objet de leurs nombreux efforts, la volonté consciencieuse de chacun d'eux était de faire renaître la gloire et l'éclat de l'Empire, d'assurer le bien-être de leurs sujets et la prospérité du pays.

Tandis que Sultan Mahmoud possédait une haute intelligence et une grande intrépidité, Sultan Abd-ul-Mejid était doué d'une bienveillance naturelle. Mais Sultan Mahmoud ne put supporter la défaite d'un simple Capitaine de Bachi-Bouzouks et abandonna le trône et la vie. Abd-ul-Mejid força le dragon et le conquérant à implorer son pardon; il réduisit la toute-puissante Russie, le Grand cauchemar de l'État, à la position d'un simple Vali d'une province, et lui infligea une inoubliable défaite. Plus tard, par un brillant Traité dont on n'a jamais vu le pareil, il contraignit les Puissances à confirmer ses droits souverains.

Les Pouvoirs Personnels et leurs Résultats différents.

Les résultats produits en égale proportion par deux différentes sortes de pouvoirs personnels sont démontrés par d'étranges événements, mais leur sage intention est claire et bien connue. Le premier comptait sur la force de son épée, l'autre sur la loi de la justice, l'établissement d'un noble ouvrage comme le Tanzimat assure un succès qui n'aurait pu être obtenu par 600 années de guerre. Le succès du dernier Monarque et la sincérité de l'approbation générale qu'obtint le Hatti-Humayoun, publié et proclamé au commencement de son règne, donne pleinement la mesure des résultats qui furent atteints par cette fondation de justice. Puisqu'il existe des méthodes justes et approuvées que vous avez héritées de votre père et qui résultent de son inspiration divine, il n'est pas certainement nécessaire de chercher un autre chemin pour administrer le pays ni d'appeler la direction et l'intermédiaire des Puissances étrangères. Mais une chose est nécessaire, mettre fin aux désastres causés par les maux notoires et les difficultés des vingt dernières années et appliquer les mesures Impériales de régénération émises à l'époque précédente, mettre en vigueur la Constitution qui fut généralement acclamée et approuvée au commencement de votre règne. On ne peut nier la nécessité de modifier et de réformer cette institution ayant de l'adapter aux transformations et aux progrès des vingt dernières années. Ces progrès du pays et du peuple Ottoman sont en rapport avec leur état de civilisation; mais quoique cette Constitution ait eu l'approbation du monde entier, au lieu de lui donner des bases solides, telles que: la garantie de la gloire et de l'honneur du Gouvernement et du pays, les transformations notifiées par l'expérience et conformes aux exigences du temps et du lieu, on a eu recours à une série de notions prêtant aux objections et pleines d'allusions. Ceci est en désaccord avec la conscience de votre Majesté, qui veille sur les besoins de la race innocente que lui a remis la confiance divine.

L'Assemblée des Notables Turcs

C'est pour cette raison que maintenant, en résumant mes observations, je propose à votre Majesté de réunir une assemblée de réformes composée de Notables

choisis parmi le peuple de votre capitale et de vos provinces. Quand ils auront réformé ces points qui réclament une modification en rapport avec les conditions nouvelles, ils les soumettront ainsi corrigé et revisé à votre Majesté. Ainsi pourrait être élaborée une Constitution soigneusement revisée avec l'approbation de votre Majesté qui devrait là-dessus promulguer un Hatt Impérial contenant ses ordonnances catégoriques. Ceci est, je le maintiens, le seul salut contre les difficultés actuelles.

Je me permets de soutenir mon plaidoyer avec une conviction si ferme et une telle audace d'opinion que, si votre Majesté approuve mes avis, je maintiens que jamais de tels cris de gratitude et de louange n'auront retenti jusqu'aux confins du monde et que les regards de l'humanité s'illumineront comme au début du règne de votre Majesté. Est si, comme au moment de la promulgation du Tanzimat, les Grandes Puissances sont invitées à garantir que cet équitable système d'administration doit demeurer en vigueur jusqu'à la fin des temps, les droits souverains de votre Majesté Impériale et des Souverains de cet Empire, l'intégrité et l'indépendance de l'Empire Ottoman sont assurés et confirmés.

Inclosure 2 in No. 302.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

YOUR Excellency is aware that Ismail Kémal Bey addressed a Mémoire to the Sultan on the 12th (24th) February, strongly animadverting on the critical state of affairs, the result of the Sultan's mistaken policy, and urging as the only remedy the immediate promulgation of a Constitution by which the people might participate in the administration. In fact, advocating the abolition of the existing despotic régime, and the inauguration of a Constitutional Government.

I had made a translation of this document, and at Ismail Kemal's request I sent the translation to M. Caulis, the correspondent of the "Temps." M. Caulis has translated into French the document, and it has now appeared *in extenso* in the "Temps" of the 8th April, in which paper it is favourably commented upon as showing that there are Turkish officials who are anxious for reform, and it is suggested that this element should not be lost sight of in treating the question of this country.

The "Temps" had already some time ago published a short summary of the Mémoire, and the Palace was somewhat irritated. The Sultan had several people connected more or less with Ismail Kemal Bey called up to the Palace and interrogated, amongst others, Mehemet Bey, the Egyptian, Abdul Huda, the Refai Sheikh, and several Albanians. Ismail Kemal is an Albanian. The Sultan did not have Ismail Kemal himself interrogated, and although it is on the cards that later he may be persecuted for having allowed this document to be published in the European press, yet for the present nothing has been said to him.

I saw Ismail Kemal this morning. He tells me that his Mémoire has been in great demand, among all classes of Turks. "Kuchuk" Said Pasha read it, and expressed his high approval, but added that there were unfortunately few others who would have dared to write and present it. Some of the Imperial Princes have read it, viz., Youssouf Izzeddin and Mejid, sons of Abd-ul-Aziz (the latter is the popular candidate for the Throne), and in fact in all circles it is read with avidity, more especially since attention has been called to it in the European press. It was, doubtless, a most unusual mark of courage at the present day to present so outspoken a paper to the Sultan; it is still more so to give it to the press. Ismail Kemal says that he desires the public in Europe to know that the Turks are not all tarred with the same brush; because the Sultan is bad there is no reason why the whole nation should suffer. Nothing is to be expected from the Sultan: How can good come from the source of all evil? And he was determined to make an effort to rouse the apathy of others, and to overcome their timidity by giving an example of what could and should be said to the Sultan, and openly talked of. He hoped it would have a good effect, and he was of opinion that it was already bearing fruit, since every one was openly commenting upon it. He said that unless some effort was made by patriots like himself, the European Powers would neglect the real feeling of the people, and the country would drift inevitably to ruin through the vices of the Sovereign. Unfortunately the reign of terror was so great that he

feared he would find few imitators, but he would continue to endeavour to rouse public opinion.

He added that the Turks were most anxiously awaiting the presentation of the scheme of reforms. Single-handed the Turks could do nothing against the Sultan, and they were relying on the Powers taking the initiative, and forcing the Sultan to confide the Government to the people. If such was the programme of the Ambassadors, they might rely on the approval and support of all the better-class Turks.

I pointed out to Ismail Kemal that the present crisis was not a favourable one for presenting reforms. He said that the present crisis might last a long time, and things will go from bad to worse without interruption, unless some remedy was found.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

April 13, 1897.

No. 303.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 258.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 15, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, inclosing the Budget for the vilayet for 1896–97.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 303.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 17.)

Sir, *Damascus, April* 3, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a Statement showing the Budget of this vilayet for the Turkish financial year 1312 (1896–97).

From information obtained, though indirectly, from an official source I should be inclined to throw some doubt on the accuracy of these figures, though they are official in the sense that they are supplied by the Financial Board of the vilayet for the purpose of publication and insertion in the "Official Almanach." I have good reason to believe that the gross amount of revenue obtained did not exceed 240,000*l.* instead of being close on 300,000*l.* as given in the Budget. The statement as to the expenditure, on the other hand, would appear to be more or less correct, so that there must have been a deficit of at least 50,000*l.*

As regards revenue, I hear on good authority that it is intended during the current year to put an additional 20 paras on to the "aghnam" or sheep tax, so as to bring it up to 3 piastres per head of sheep, while the tithes, I am told, may, not improbably, be raised to 12 piastres instead of 11½ piastres as heretofore.

This additional taxation will, it is hoped, prevent the recurrence of a deficit during the present year. I hear, moreover, that the military authorities intend, if possible, to realize considerable economies in the future by bringing the strong cotton material of which the summer uniforms of the troops are made direct from Manchester, paying cash, instead of buying it from middlemen here or in Beyrout. A similar plan is to be followed as regards petroleum, rice, and other necessaries which could be obtained at much less cost if they were purchased wholesale in the country of origin. I am given to understand that as much as £T. 20,000 a-year could be saved in this way.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 302.

Budget of the Vilâyet of Damascus for the Year 1312 (1896–97).

Recettes du Vilayet.	£	Dépenses du Vilayet.	£
Impôt Foncier (Verghu)	96,168	Magistrature (Shari-Adlié)	12,770
Dîmes	8,127	Dépenses [illegible], traitements ..	59,010
Contribution militaire des Chrétiens ..	19,171	Traitements spéciaux, retraites, &c. ..	17,280
Moutons	53,981	Liste Civile	3,672
Chèvres	20	Guerre	119,190
Bœufs	1,[illegible]	[illegible]	58,129
Buffles	10,[illegible]	Police	[illegible]
Dîmes	106	Service Sanitaire	18
Droits et timbres	218	Divers	15,008
Mines	5,136		
Tapu-sanad immeubles	215		
[illegible]	[illegible]		
Revenus des Tribunaux	6,118		
Divers			
Total	207,908	Total	298,397

No. 301.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 259.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 15, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, commenting on a violent patriotic article which had appeared in a local newspaper.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 301.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Damascus, April 7, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that an article appeared in a local newspaper called "Shura" towards the end of last week, which has excited considerable comment throughout the city, giving rise, among the Christian classes of the population, to general expressions of indignation, and even alarm. The article in question, which was signed "Nazmi," is of considerable length, and may be described in general terms as an urgent appeal to Turkish Moslems to trust no longer to the fallacious representations of the European Powers, Great Britain especially being denounced as a broken reed in which no reliance should be placed; to rally round the Throne of their Sultan; to purify the Civil Administration by expelling all those functionaries who are likely to prove traitors to the "holy cause;" and to show the Greeks and "their ambitious allies" that the Ottoman right arm is as strong and the Ottoman sword as sharp as ever it was in the past.

My French colleague, as Doyen of the Consular Corps, protested in very strong terms to the Acting Vali (the Cadi) against the appearance of such an article at so critical a period as the present, more especially pointing out that Nazmi Effendi, its writer, is Sous-Procureur-General for the Hauran Sanjak, while the proprietor and editor of the paper itself, a certain Mustapha Wassaf Effendi, is also director of the printing-press of this vilayet. In consequence of this protest, the next issue of the "Shura" paper contained a paragraph in which the offending article is designated as "improper," and a warning is given to all intending writers that such language will no longer be permitted to appear in the paper. The incident is therefore closed; but I feel it to be my duty to state that, in my opinion, the importance attached to the article has been somewhat exaggerated, many Moslems having assured me that, had not the Christians been so loud in their angry protests against the article, it would have roused very little interest and less

excitement in Mahommedan circles, where such language with its somewhat hollow ring is taken at its true value.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 305.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 260.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 15, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 76 of the 9th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, reporting on the state of security in the Hedjaz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 305.

Consul Dewey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Jeddah, March 31, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to return herewith the correspondence forwarded in the Embassy despatch of the 15th instant, and the satisfaction to state that the Hedjaz has been in a satisfactory state and undisturbed by raids and robbery during the last four months, but it should be noted that during the winter pilgrim caravans travel by day and not by night, thereby avoiding danger in some degree.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEWEY.

No. 306.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 261.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 15, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting certain cases of assassination in that town, and the excitement thereby aroused.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 306.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Beirout, April 8, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that considerable excitement has been aroused amongst the native population of this city by the occurrence of some cases of assassination within the last few days under the following circumstances:—

A native Christian belonging to the criminal class having succeeded in effecting his escape from prison shot at and killed on Monday, the 5th instant, a Mussulman zaptieh who, in obedience to instructions, was endeavouring to rearrest him.

Though there was no evidence of any personal quarrel between the runaway prisoner and the murdered man, the friends of the latter appear to have determined to wreak vengeance on the Christians indiscriminately, with the result that two Lebanese Christians, wholly unconnected as it would seem with the zaptieh's murderer, were deliberately shot at while walking along the highway on the night of Tuesday last, death ensuing almost instantaneously in one case, the other man surviving his friend but a few minutes.

No evidence could be obtained from the dying man with regard to their assailants,

who had attacked them from behind, but his Excellency the new Wali, who had only just arrived in Beirout, appears to have acted with energy, and it is reported that, while taking steps in conjunction with his Excellency Naoum Pasha to bring to justice the zaptieh's murderer, who has taken refuge in the Lebanon district, he has already had some native Mussulmans placed under arrest on suspicion of being concerned in the crime, a measure which is at least calculated to allay the excitement that has been produced among the native Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 307.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 262.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 15, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Major Bulman, reporting on the work of the Tokat Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 307.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Tokat, April 8, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Commission is still engaged in preliminary inquiries. About 200 arrests have been made, but except the Mutessarif, the Commandant of Police and Gendarmerie, none of importance. Among those arrested were some Circassians, who stated that an invitation had been sent to their village to come and pillage and massacre Tokat. The arrest of these Circassians has given rise to great irritation among their countrymen against the Turks, and I have been privately informed by one of them that a letter was sent stating that there was an order from the Sultan for a massacre at Tokat. Before this avowal I had reason to believe that such a letter had been sent, and had already sent a man secretly to the village with orders to buy it, if possible, but I have now small hopes of obtaining it. At present two Turks, Hadji Sali and Ali Bey, are charged with having sent invitations for the massacre, but they are not men of any position, and it is most unlikely they should do so without encouragement from higher quarters. The attempt to shield the Military Commandant leads to the surmise that the scheme was confided to him. Apart from his responsibility as Commandant, he is also guilty of killing an Armenian during the massacre.

The circumstances are as follows:—

The house of an Armenian named Aligusian was attacked and the door burst in. The Armenian, who had fled to the upper story, fired a revolver, without, however, wounding any one, and the rioters then scuttled out. At this moment the Commandant appeared, and asked what was going on. He was answered, "The Giaours are firing on us." He then ordered the soldiers to fire, and the Armenian was struck with several bullets and killed. The Commandant states he fired on the Turkish rioters. To this I replied that the witnesses stated that the Commandant asked what was going on, and was told by the rioters that the Giaours had fired on them, and he thus knew on whom he ordered the soldiers to fire. It is also unnecessary to point out that, as no one else was hit but an Armenian, who was struck several times, it is incredible to suppose that he really fired on the Turks.

I informed Hasan Fehmi Pasha that, apart from his responsibility as Commandant, I regarded him as a common assassin.

I also informed Hasan Fehmi Pasha that I expected an indemnity would be paid to the families of those who had been killed. I beg that an order may be sent to this effect, as many are in a destitute condition.

Some incidents of exceptional brutality occurred. Among these I mention the case of two men whose legs were cut off and thrown into the street, who, I am informed, lived for some time after.

Another case was that of a small girl who tried to shield her father, and was in consequence killed herself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 308.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 230.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 19, 1897, 11·45 A.M.*

REPETITION of telegram received last night from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir:—

"The American missionaries at Mardin have telegraphed to me requesting me to inform your Excellency that the sentence of death has been passed on the murderers of the relief agent, Yusuf Yunan, and that the dossier has been forwarded by post.

"An excellent effect would be produced were this sentence to be carried out."

No. 309.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 19.)

(No. 241.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 19, 1897.*

THE following is a telegram just received from Mr. Monahan at Bitlis:—

"The 9th April being a festival, the Armenian church was full of people in the evening, when two soldiers, said to have been drunk, entered the building, and one of them firing his revolver wounded an Armenian. A panic ensued, but the offenders were arrested and the town has been quiet since."

No. 310.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 286. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Paris, April 20, 1897.*

NUBAR PASHA called on me this morning, being anxious, he said, to communicate to me a piece of information which he received yesterday from what he considers a trustworthy source.

It was to the effect that two of the ringleaders of the attack upon the Ottoman Bank last year, who were removed from Constantinople under the arrangement entered into for the evasion of those concerned in the outrage, are again in that city in hiding; but it is believed that their presence is perfectly well known to the Turkish police, and that a recommencement of bomb-throwing would, if the moment were well chosen, be gladly welcomed by the Sultan and the Palace clique as affording a good pretext for rejecting the project of reforms and for instituting severe measures against the Armenians.

Nubar Pasha stated that, amongst the Armenians, it is notorious that all their revolutionary compatriots are Russian emissaries, who receive their orders from Tiflis. This is, he says, avowed by the individuals themselves.

His Excellency is most anxious as to what may happen in regard to the Armenians, believing that the Sultan will seize upon any pretext for a new persecution, and that Europe will be powerless to prevent it. The Greeks, he said, are comparatively safe, as they are denizens of the towns on the littoral; but the Armenians are scattered about the interior of Asia Minor at the mercy of the Turks.

I promised to mention his apprehensions to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 311.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 264.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 23, 1897, 11·15 p.m.*

FOLLOWING is the translation of a telegram sent by the Austrian Consul at Janina in the name of the Consular Body :-

"The soldiers who have mutinied are threatening the town, and refuse to march. The Consular Corps and the whole Christian population are in a critical position. The Mussulman population is leaving the town *en masse*, and taking refuge in the citadel. Please have immediate instructions sent to the Vali to allow us arms and ammunition, which he at present refuses to do."

No. 312.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 264. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 15, 1897.*

HAVING heard that M. Cambon had been successful in obtaining from the Turkish Government a sum of 365,000*l.* as an indemnity for the Beyrout Damascus-Biredjik Railway Company, I applied privately to the French Embassy to ascertain whether there was any truth in the report. From what I have been able to learn the circumstances are as follows :—

In 1893 a French Company obtained the Concession for the construction of a railway from Damascus to Biredjik, a town on the Euphrates, with the promise of a kilometric guarantee. They proceeded to make the preliminary surveys, raise the necessary capital, and enter into contracts with various French firms for the construction of a line. They could not, however, induce the Porte to agree to the survey of the line submitted by their engineers, and were last year requested to defer the construction of the line for some years, on the ground that it was, under the present circumstances, neither politically nor commercially necessary, and that the district was too poor to pay the kilometric guarantee.

The Company objected that this delay would entail loss on their shareholders; but finally, with the aid of the French Embassy, the following arrangement was come to: the Company undertook to defer the commencement of the works for some years, and the Porte on their side agreed to accept the proposed plan of this line, and to pay to the Company annually, until the railway is in working order, a sum of money guaranteed on the tithes of the district. I am unable to state the exact amount of this sum, but it appears to have been calculated on the basis of reimbursing the shareholders for the loss entailed by the delay, and is much less than the kilometric guarantee.

At the time when the arrangement was made the Foreign Minister spoke of it to Mr. Block as a most unfair one to Turkey, but added that the demands of the French Ambassador were so peremptory that, coming as they did at the time when M. Hanotaux was exercising great pressure in regard to the reforms, and to the case of Père Salvatore, the Turkish Government had been unable to resist them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 313.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 265.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting on events at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 313.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 34.)
Sir, *Baghdad, March 24, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour very respectfully to submit, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a news-letter No. 10, dated the 17th March, 1897, from Mr. Nimrud Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 313.

Mr. Rassam to Consul-General Mockler.

(No. 10.)
(Translation.) *Mosul, March 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Sheikh Muhammad-el-Birzani having seized Fateh Agha, of Zibar, who, as reported in my No. 5, dated the 21st January, 1897, had plundered his house, made him over to the authorities of the Zibar district, and they having sent him down to Mosul under a guard from the zaptiehs, he was, on his arrival, directly put in prison under the Wali's orders. According to what I hear, this man wished to bribe the Wali with 1,000 liras to set him and his two brothers, Osman Agha and Abdulla Agha, free—the two latter have been in prison since the time of Farik Abdullah Pasha, but the Wali refused the offer, requiring the prisoner to declare the 1,000 liras for his own release only. This Fateh Agha is an exceedingly wicked man, disposed to oppress to murder and plunder, as he has killed numerous people and plundered very many houses.

Under orders from Constantinople, all available funds found in the Treasury of Public Works of the Wilaiat, amounting to more than 3,000 liras, were remitted to that place.

His Excellency Zia Pasha, the Head of the Council for the Administration of the Senia lands, arrived here last week, and a pay of 5,000 G. S. piastres was assigned to him.

His Beatitude Mar Abd Yeshoo, the Chaldæan Patriarch, has in these days been compelled to proceed to the village of Alcosh, in the district of Dhok, in order to make some arrangement for reduction of the heavy taxes which have put the inhabitants to such great straits as they were unable to bear, and the authorities are continually pressing upon them with importunity.

(Signed) NIMRUD RASSAM.

No. 314.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 267.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting a threatened disturbance at Sheiran and the steps taken to prevent the outbreak.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 314.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Trebizond, April 9, 1897.*

THE Christians of Sheiran and its neighbourhood were in a state of panic last week, so much so, that in their apprehension of a massacre they were on the point of deserting their homes and emigrating into Russia.

Information of this reached Trebizond through the channel of the Greek clergy. It was at once made known to the Vali, who, by taking immediate action, succeeded in soon quieting such fears. Djemal Bey, the Mutessarif of Gumushkhaneh (and a force of gendarmes) was promptly dispatched to the locality, with instructions to open a rigorous inquiry, and mete out condign punishment to the disturbers of the peace.

Djemal Bey's telegram reporting the result of his investigations may be briefly given as follows:—

1. Mehmed Bey, agent of the Tobacco Régie at Sheiran, had been inciting the Moslems to treat the Greeks as they had done the Armenians.

2. Ahmed Riza Effendi, the Kaimakam of the town, heard the instigations without remonstrance.

3. An Armenian priest had been beaten badly by some Turks now in custody.

In conclusion, I would beg leave to state that both Riza Effendi and Mehmed Bey have been summarily dismissed and expelled from Sheiran. The former is to be replaced for the time being by Hussein Bey, Sanjak Beyzadeh, a Notable of Trebizond, who is considered to be a man of some tact and judgment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 315.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 268.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the state of the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 315.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11.)
Sir, *Van, March 20, 1897.*

REFERRING to your Excellency's telegram of the 19th March, I have the honour to report that there is no reason to apprehend disturbances at Van.

The Patriarch probably referred to the time of the "scare," reported in my despatch No. 8, the effects of which have now passed away.

I have long been aware that the Armenians of Van were very much afraid of both Halim Bey and the Colonel of the Gendarmerie, and I have mentioned this matter both to the Vali and the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Troops.

Halim Bey is an exceedingly able man. He is, however, like most of his neighbours, always intriguing. I believe him to be the Chief of the young Turks here. A few days ago he left for Bayazid, where he has been transferred.

The Colonel of the Gendarmerie, Isak Bey, is a fanatical, stupid man, who is quite unfitted for his post. I was hoping that permission would have been granted him to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, but I have just heard that he is not to go. It would be a great thing if he could be got rid of, and his Major, Hosein Effendi, appointed to succeed him.

Ahmed Khan is a very insignificant Kurdish Agha, whom the Vali is unable to arrest, owing to his being a Binbashi of Hamidieh cavalry. Some Christians from his village fled here a month ago, and came on the relief. I took the matter up on these grounds, and they have now returned.

Shakir Agha is the notorious brigand who has now been pardoned. He is said to be occupied in getting back stolen property. Considering the state of the country, his pardon was a wise and politic act, and in the interests of the Christian peasantry.

After what has happened, it is quite natural that there should be occasional panics, but I can see no serious cause of alarm as long as the troops remain staunch.

As I have repeatedly pressed on your Excellency, the money question is becoming so serious that, unless something is done, there is the danger that they may become disaffected.

To such a pass have we come that during the past week the troops have, by the Vali's orders, been cutting down timber belonging to Mahommedans to cook their food. There has also been great difficulty about the rations. The troops were several days without meat, and the artillery horses have no barley. There are at present ten battalions in the vilayet, besides artillery, and 80 liras are required daily for food alone.

I beg of your Excellency to try and get some money sent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 316.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 269.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 19, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 260 of the 27th March respecting the execution of the general amnesty in the Consular district of Smyrna, I have the honour to report that the Council of Ministers have decided that the six Armenians imprisoned at Mitylene for blasphemy should benefit by the amnesty, and the Vali has accordingly been instructed to set them at liberty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 317.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 270.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, reporting certain frauds practised in that vilayet in connection with the calling out of the Redifs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 317.

Vice-Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 34.)
Sir, *Angora, April 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, according to an announcement which has appeared in the "Angora," the local journal of the vilayet, of the 6th instant, a Commission, consisting of Colonel Shevki and Major Nazim Beys, and Surgeon-Captain Ahmed Djemal Effendi, of the Ministry of War, has arrived at Angora, and has left for the Cazas of Ayash and Beybazar, to inquire into certain abuses and embezzlements committed in connection with the recent mobilization of Redifs in those districts.

According to information which I have received, the embezzlements and extortions practised were considerable, amounting, I believe, to some 700 or 800 Turkish liras, and the *modus operandi* appears to have been very simple. The officials namely charged with the duty of enrolling the Redifs gave out that the Ihtiyatts (first line of Reserve) were to be called out as well, but stated that for a consideration, 5, 6, or 10 liras, as the case might be, the persons so paying would be allowed to remain quietly at home. The officials in this way enriched themselves by the sum I have mentioned above, and it was not until it became known among the Mussulman peasantry of those districts that there had been no question at all of summoning the Ihtiyatts, but only the

Redifs, that complaints reached the authorities of the frauds which had been practised. The dishonesty of the above officials is the more disgraceful, as the victims were for the most part poor agriculturists, without means of protecting themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 318.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 278.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 21, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 240 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, commenting upon the appointment of Zewer Pasha as Military Commandant of the town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 318.

Consul Dickson to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, April 8, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram of this day's date, I have the honour to report to your Excellency the following circumstances in connection with the removal of Rustem Pasha, the Commander of the Troops in this city, and the appointment of Zewer Pasha from Marash as his successor.

For some time past the Military Pasha and the Mutessarif of Jerusalem have not been on very friendly terms, and recently an incident occurred which caused the coolness between them to assume a more serious turn. Rustem Pasha had been, it seems, endeavouring to get his son, who holds the rank of Lieutenant in the Turkish army, appointed clerk of the battalion stationed here, but the Mutessarif, through influence at Constantinople, succeeded in securing the appointment for his own nephew instead, who is also an officer in the Turkish army. Rustem Pasha was much incensed at this, and, meeting the Mutessarif's nephew one morning whilst going to the Mosque, he struck him in the public street. The Mutessarif at once telegraphed a complaint against him to Constantinople, and the result was that orders arrived that he should proceed to Marash, and that Zewer Pasha, the Commander of the Troops at that place, should replace him here.

As Zewer Pasha had been implicated in the massacres at Marash, and appears to have taken part in the trial and acquittal of Mazhar Bey, who was accused of the murder of Father Salvatore, my French and Italian colleagues decided to telegraph to their Embassies at Constantinople, pointing out that his appointment to Jerusalem would be very undesirable, as it would produce an unfavourable impression on the Europeans and Christian population, and on the 6th instant they informed me that they had done so. At the same time, I learnt that my Russian colleague had also telegraphed, and accordingly I telegraphed to your Excellency in a similar sense.

I have the honour to add that Zewer Pasha arrived here yesterday evening from Damascus, and was met at the railway station, with every mark of attention and respect, by the Mutessarif and a number of Turkish officials, as well as by a military escort.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN DICKSON.

No. 319.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 279.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 262 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, reporting on the preliminary investigations of the Tokat Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 319.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Tokat, April 14, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Commission is still engaged in preliminary investigations, but on Saturday the trials are expected to commence. There are now more than 300 prisoners, but none of importance, and it does not appear that the Commission has any intention to press the investigation. This opinion may be incorrect, but Hassan Fehmy Pasha has several times used language that leads me to suppose that he will minimize the affair as much as possible. He informed me the whole affair was caused by a small clique in one quarter of Tokat. I replied that the clique must have branch cliques of some extent, as at least four places in the province had been threatened simultaneously. He said that a fire once lighted sometimes burnt more than was intended. I replied that as Turkey had lighted the fire, we waited to see, first, if the Turkish Government wished, and, secondly, if it was able to extinguish the conflagration. From the general tone of his remarks, I am confident that small good will result; and once recognized that the Government itself ordered the massacre, this is not to be wondered at. Abundant evidence is forthcoming that the massacre was prearranged. An Armenian of the village Taktovar, not far from here, told me that, on Thursday evening before the massacre, a Circassian friend of his came and told him that the next day there would be a massacre at Tokat; and as there might also be one at his village, he invited him and his family to come with him for safety. He did so. Another case is that of a carter conveying two Armenians and a Greek to Niksar on day of massacre. During the day he said: "About this time they have begun to kill the Christians at Tokat." It also appears certain that several letters of invitation were sent. One of these I have traced on what I consider sufficient evidence. It was sent by a Turk of Tokat, called Riza Effendi, by a man called Bekir, a native of Bukmundush, to a village called Madas. In it was an invitation to the village to choose ten men and send them early to Tokat on Friday morning. I informed Hassan Fehmy Pasha of this letter, and told him I knew it to be in the hands of an Imam of Madas. He has not yet informed me if he has secured it. An Armenian told me that, on the morning of the massacre, he followed the Mutessarif as he passed through some of the bazaars, telling the Armenians not to close their shops. The Mutessarif then seated himself near a khan, called Pasha Khan, and with him a Turk, called Agajik, a member of the Tribunal of Justice. This Armenian then heard a Turk ask the Mutessarif if it was time to begin. He received an answer in the affirmative, and the massacre at once commenced in that quarter. I am perfectly convinced that the man is speaking the truth, and, if so, it is useless to suppose that the Commission will do anything, as the Mutessarif no doubt acted on orders. As a further instance of what justice the Commission is likely to administer, I mention the case of three Armenians who petitioned the Commission against a Turk, stating he had murdered an Armenian. The Turk was imprisoned. A few days after the wife of the Turkish prisoner gave birth to a still-born child. The three Armenians are now in prison charged with causing the death of this child. As this only happened to-day, I have not yet drawn the attention of Hassan Fehmy Pasha to the matter. In addition to the villages I have previously mentioned as having been pillaged, a small settlement of five or six Armenian houses, called "Akhool," was also looted, and one house burnt. The state of the Armenian villages in this district is unsatisfactory. The villagers are afraid to leave their villages, even the short distance necessary to plough some of their more distant fields. A villager of Capon Ajiz told me yesterday that, four days ago, three Armenians

of Canon Ajiz, who were at some distance from the village, were fired on by Turks. The Turkish population is in a general state of ferment, and are exasperated against their own Government on account of the numbers now in prison, openly stating that the massacre was encouraged by the Government, who have therefore no right to imprison them. Some demonstration against the Government on this account is very probable during the trials. One good result of this massacre is, that the Armenians seem now convinced that such disorders will continue, and all who can are decided to use every effort to emigrate. Hitherto they have apparently thought that each massacre would be the last, although on no single occasion have I encouraged them to think so. If it be possible to obtain for them a free permission, not only to emigrate, but also to move into other less disturbed provinces, many will avail themselves of it, and a benefit of practical use will be conferred on them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 320.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 280.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting the release of eight political prisoners at Tripoli, respecting whose detention I had made representations.

I have &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 320.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 29.)
Sir, *Beirout, April 14, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 12 of the 16th February last, transmitting a list of names of eighteen Armenian political prisoners then interned in the gaol at Tripoli, I have now the honour to report the liberation about a fortnight ago, in conformity with orders to that effect received from Constantinople, of eight of the prisoners, whose names, a list of which I beg to forward herewith, I have only recently been able to obtain.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

List of Names of Eight Armenians released from Tripoli Gaol.

Gul Missak.	Aram.
Warran.	Avak.
Ardat.	Karkor.
Simon.	Artin.

D. H.

No. 321.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 281.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 22, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 64 of the 23rd February, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the condition of the Nestorian Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 321.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Van, March 25, 1897.*

REFERRING to your Excellency's despatch of the 1st March and inclosures, I have the honour to report that I have no information as to this further outrage on the property of the Syrian Metropolitan. I have, however, brought the matter to the notice of the Vali, who has called on the Mutessarif of Hekkiari for a report, and directed him to use all possible efforts to prevent further lawlessness.

The situation is, however, distinctly better. I hear good reports of the new Kaimakam of Gawar, and if only Mahommed Sadik were to be removed, I think that most of the refugees who have fled to Persia would be able to return to their homes.

The inquiry into the murder of Quesha Sirhar, reported in my despatch No. 7, has been removed to Van, and it is to be hoped that justice will eventually be done, though it is unlikely that it will be brought home to the real instigator, Sheikh Sadik.

The important question of permission being given to the Metropolitan to go to Persia, mentioned in my despatch No. 9, has now been settled. Orders have been sent to the Mutessarif to provide him with the necessary escort, if he still wishes to leave the country. I have written privately to Mr. Browne at Kochannes, informing him of this decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 322.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26, 4·30 P.M.)

(No. 260.)
(Telegraphic.) *En clair.* *Pera, April 26, 1897, 2·47 P.M.*

YOUR Lordship's despatch No. 195.

I have repeatedly pressed the Porte for a reply to my Memorial respecting the Eghin massacre, and on receipt of your Lordship's despatch I sent Mr. Block to inform the Foreign Minister that a question on the subject would be asked in the House of Commons on the 27th. He yesterday sent following message through the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs:—

"In conformity with the contents of the *pro-mémorid* presented by Her Majesty's Embassy regarding the events at Eghin, the Sublime Porte has ordered that a searching inquiry should be held at once to establish the responsibility of those concerned, and to punish severely those who shall be proved to have abused their authority. The result of the inquiry will be communicated as soon as received."

No. 323.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 274.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 26, 1897.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Jeddah reports arrival of "Sybille." No offence given to local authorities, but foreign subjects reassured.

No. 324.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 276.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 26, 1897, 8·10 P.M.*

IN continuation of my telegram No. 269, I have been informed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that instructions have been sent to the Vali of Kharput, and that the latter will, in consequence, probably cause an inquiry to be made into the Eghin massacre by a special official on the spot.

But I fear that these statements are only made in order to put a stop to questions in the House of Commons, and that no satisfactory result will be attained.

No. 325.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 295.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 2, 1897, 11·50 P.M.*

THE following is a repetition of two telegrams sent to me yesterday from Tokat by Major Bulman:—

"One Mussulman was yesterday condemned to death, another to six years' imprisonment, and a third to four.

"To-day the Commission condemned a Turk named Migdad to fifteen years' imprisonment for murdering Armenians during the massacres. The offence was proved, but it was held that he committed the murders unintentionally.

"This is a proof that the Commission intend to pass no more sentences of death."

No. 326.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 283.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 23, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting on the situation at Adiaman and Behesni.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 326.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 21.)
Sir, *Kharput, April 6, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour herewith to inclose copy of a letter addressed to me by an acquaintance who has lately been touring in certain districts of this vilayet, and upon which was based my telegram to your Excellency of the 3rd instant.

The Administrative Council here meets every Saturday, so that I was unwilling to importune the Vali upon the date referred to. I therefore wrote to the Mouavin, requesting him to inform the Governor-General of the precarious situation at Behesni, and to suggest, in my name, that a telegram should be dispatched to the Kaïmakam there, instructing him to take the necessary precautions.

My suggestion was communicated to and acted upon by Raouf Bey, who informed me, when I called upon him yesterday, that the Kaïmakam of Behesni was a weak man, and that he would shortly be replaced by a more capable official.

The relations of this Kaïmakam with the Officers Commanding the garrison of that town are, it appears, somewhat strained, and more especially so with the Colonel-Aghasi or Adjutant, who is doing his best, nevertheless, to prevent an outbreak.

Yacob Pasha, the brave and kindly Turk alluded to in my despatches No. 26 of the 15th June and No. 41 of the 28th August, 1896, as having saved so many hundreds of lives under the most trying circumstances, is now advanced in years and feeble in health, and his position at Behesni must, I fear, be difficult in the extreme. A decoration conferred by his Sovereign—such as was recently bestowed upon Marshal Fewik Pasha, Vali of Angora—would immensely increase this gallant officer's prestige and influence among the Mussulman Notables of his *entourage*, and in default of such decoration a written approval of his excellent services would suffice no doubt to strengthen his hands, and, by encouraging other Moslems to follow his example, better the condition of the local Armenians, for whose protection and well-being he has so zealously and disinterestedly laboured hitherto.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA

Inclosure 2 in No. 326.

——— *to Vice-Consul Fontana.*

(Extract.) *Akntab, March 25, 1897.*

I HAVE been travelling lately in the southern outposts of your vilayet, and wish to call your attention to a few things there.

I suppose the beating of the Christian policemen is too well-known everywhere now to need repetition; but it must be admitted that the Government has been following that up well, at least was doing so when I was in Adiaman three weeks ago. The present Kaïmakam seems to be a very decent fellow, but some things are going on there in a way that is very bad.

1. There is a Christian Saudouk-Emini put in that office by the insistance of the Mutessarif Pasha against the protests of the Moslem Aghas. But since being put in he has been addressed, when performing his duties, as "Hinzir-Kyalir." If it was in the market, why he must take his chances with other Christians. But it was at the Serai and while performing his official duties. No man, no Christian in Adiaman would dare, however, to say anything about it.

2. The Christians who owe the Government 5 or 10 liras are being sorely pushed to the wall for their money. But Moslem Aghas (one of whom, Musto Oglou Bekir Agha, if I do not mistake the name, owes, the Saudouk-Emini states, as much as 2,500 liras) are untouched. If the Government is so hard up, why not collect the dues of some of these gentry? The fact is Adiaman is out of the way, and so the Moslem Aghas manage things there to a degree to suit themselves, more than obtains elsewhere in this region.

At Behesni there is a bad state of things. The Kaïmakam is a cypher, does nothing bad, and does also nothing good. Yacob Pasha still protects the Christians, but is a sick old man, and it is a question how long he will hold out against the taunts of the turbulent classes. They especially call to his attention the fact that no notice whatever has been

taken of his protection of the Christians, to say nothing of any reward on account of it. Some signal recognition sent him from Constantinople, as was sent through Mr. Fitzmaurice's efforts to Hadji Zachariah (?) and Nejib Effendi at Birejik, would be a great advantage to the Christians. As it is, they are running away in quite considerable numbers. The military, whilst protecting the Christians after a fashion, are behaving very badly in other respects. A Yuz-Bashi, Ali Effendi, of the Behesni Redifs, beat the Christian Sandouk-Emini openly just because the latter refused to cash a cheque for monthly payment which the Mal-Mudiri had not authorized. Another Christian is being confined for six months in the closest confinement on a false charge of striking a military officer who was beating him in his own shop. This was, so to speak, technically proved by two false witnesses who were prepared specially for the purpose. The officer was nominally sentenced to a week's confinement. He was kept at his work however.

Behesni is in a bad way, and unless something decided is done, there will probably be a massacre there. The lack of punishment for the guilty has made most of them very sorry they did not carry out a massacre there before. Last week there was an attempt at massacre that came very near being successful. It was, however, put down by the Kol-Aghasi.

No. 327.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 281.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 23, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting a revival of the agitation among the Armenians in that town and consequent renewal of arrests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 327.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, April 12, 1897*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Armenian Revolutionary Party, who since the proclamation of the general amnesty, had maintained an attitude of expectancy, show signs of having lost patience and resumed their activity. The Vali informed me to-day that some documents pointing to this conclusion have just fallen into the hands of the authorities, including one which purports to emanate from the Central Revolutionary Committee in London, and indicates the intention to create disturbances in various places the names of which are disguised, but which he understands to mean, amongst others, Erzeroum, the Hekkiari, and the Boulanik Caza of Bitlis.

Half-a-dozen arrests of suspects have been effected at Erzeroum within the last few days, and yesterday evening a detachment of gendarmerie surrounded the village of Sitaouk, about ten miles distant from Erzeroum, and seized thirty-four Mauser rifles and over a thousand cartridges which they found concealed in the roof of an Armenian house, the owner of which and five other villagers were brought as prisoners to Erzeroum. According to the Vali these rifles have recently been smuggled from the Russian frontier, and they are all without stocks, apparently for convenience of transport and concealment.

It is, however, to be noted that the previous existence of arms in Sitaouk was notorious, and materially assisted to preserve the village in October 1895 from massacre and pillage at the hands of the roving bands of Turks and Lazes who overran the whole plain of Erzeroum, but gave a wide birth to any point where the Armenians were supposed to be armed, and resolved to defend themselves.

Under the circumstances, the Armenians are hardly to be blamed if they retain, for self-defence, such few arms as they possess or endeavour to provide themselves with fresh ones, in defiance of the present monstrously unequal application of the law on this subject.

In consequence of the uncertainty of the political situation and of the above evidences of a revival of Armenian agitation occasioned thereby, within the last three or four days

the Christian population of Erzeroum has been somewhat affected by panic, which the Vali is doing his utmost to allay.

On Friday last the soldiers were forbidden access to the town, which was strongly patrolled, and a Turk and an Armenian who were reported to the Vali as having worked upon the fears of the Christians by stories of impending massacre have been arrested and imprisoned, while I understand that his Excellency has summoned the leading Mussulmans to his presence, and informed them that he would hold them responsible for the maintenance of order in their respective quarters of the city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 328.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 293.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 27, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting that the Christians who suffered during the disturbances in that vilayet are relieved from payment of the military exemption tax for two years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 328.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 3, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that an order relieving Christians who were plundered in the disturbances from the military exemption tax for two years was received in this vilayet towards the end of February or in the early part of March, and is now being observed in the tax collecting which has begun for the new financial year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 329.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 294.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 27, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 186 of the 31st March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, reporting the arrest of Mussulman conspirators, and the satisfaction of the Christian population at this action of the Vali.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 329.

Vice-Consul Monahan to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Bitlis, April 2, 1897.*

AS I had the honour to report in my telegrams Nos. 24, 25, 27, and 28 of the 31st ultimo and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd instant respectively, the Vali has had ten Mussulmans of this town arrested within the last four days.

Of the ten, four or five, including Hajji Nejmeddin and Yahsin Effendis, of whom I wrote in my despatch No. 61 of the 24th November last, are leading men and well-

known fanatics: the rest are of less importance, but are all dangerous characters, and include one ruffian, who is said to have killed twenty persons in the massacre.

During the last six or seven weeks considerable uneasiness has been showing itself among the Christians in Bitlis, especially on Fridays. Two weeks ago a written Petition was addressed to me, which spoke of Mussulmans arming and of impending massacre, and Christians have been keeping away from the bazaar as much as possible. Strong guards have been patrolling the town, several Mussulmans have been disarmed, and last week a new long Proclamation against disorder appeared on the walls. On Friday, the 26th ultimo, there was a short panic caused by a wounded wild boar rushing into the town from a neighbouring village, and being fired at by somebody on the outskirts of the town.

It appears that some of the arrested Mussulmans have been meeting and planning disturbance in the house and under the presidency of the well-known Sheikh Amin, and have caused disquietude by threatening Armenians, and advising Armenian friends of theirs to close their shops and keep away from the market.

What may have been the ultimate design of the conspirators, some of whom are personal enemies of the Vali, is less clear. It may have been to discredit the Vali, or to intimidate the Sultan.

The Vali's action has given general satisfaction to the peaceable people, Christian and Mussulman, of Bitlis, and has inspired the Christians with a confidence which, I am told, has been unknown for years. Sheikh Amin is perhaps too powerful to be touched at present, but the Vali is watching him. The banishment of the Sheikh is much desired.

The Vali is said to have demanded the banishment of nine of the arrested Mussulmans, and the nine have sent to Constantinople a long telegram complaining of his action in arresting them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

No. 330.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 295.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 28, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting a renewal of activity among the Armenian revolutionists.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 330.

Major Williams to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Van, April 5, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that there has lately been a renewal of activity among the revolutionary Armenians both here and in Persia. Armenian letters from Tiflis of recent date say that some of the leaders have been told by the Russian authorities to keep quiet till May (o.s.); but that if, by that time, there is no change in the situation, they will receive help in arms, money, and men. What truth there may be in this I am, of course, unable to say, but the Armenians most likely to know say it is improbable that the follies of last year will be repeated unless the Committees have some assurance of outside support.

The people of Van are naturally extremely anxious; but they have been somewhat reassured by the Vali, who summoned twenty-five of the Notables to his house, and talked wisely and well to them.

The exile of the three Kurdish Pashas, which, I am told, has been decided on, has also had a tranquillizing effect.

Whatever the future may have in store, I am confident that the Vali and the General Commanding the Troops will do their best to maintain order, and in this they will have the

support of most of the regular officers. I think, however, that, if it can possibly be managed, a regiment of regular cavalry, under a selected officer, should be stationed on the Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. H. WILLIAMS.

No. 331.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 3.)

(No. 296.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 28, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 134 of the 3rd March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, to whom I had forwarded a copy of the Petition of the Druses of Mejd-el-Sheins for inquiry into the truth of their statements, and for such unofficial action as he might properly take on their behalf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 331.

Consul Richards to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 21.)
Sir, *Damascus, April 16, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 5th instant, inclosing copy of a Petition received from the inhabitants of Mejd-el-Sheins, in which they complain bitterly of the maladministration of that district, I have the honour to report that I have brought the matter to the notice of his Excellency the Vali.

After due inquiry, Hassan Pasha informed me that, as regards the land of which the petitioners complain they have been deprived, it was never rightfully theirs, having been taken by them some years ago from the inhabitants of Jebattat-el-Zeit; that this fact was proved in Court when the case was tried in Damascus in the time the ownership of the land in question was in dispute; that the villagers of Mejd-el-Sheins appealed against this decision, which, however, was confirmed by the Court of Appeal here; and that, although they might have carried the case to the Cour de Cassation at Constantinople, they allowed the term fixed by the law to elapse without taking the necessary steps to do so. Their defence appears to have consisted of the plea that they had been in occupation of the land for some years. A claim which, in view of the fact that they originally took forcible possession of it, as it is alleged, cannot be recognized by the law.

As regards the various acts of murder and robbery of which the petitioners complain, the Vali has asked me to make out a detailed list of them, on receipt of which he promises to make inquiries. This I have now done, and I hope that the necessary steps will be taken to insure, where possible, the punishment of the guilty persons.

With reference to the charges of neglect and oppression brought against the authorities of Mejd-el-Sheins, the Vali assures me that the Mudir, Ajaj Agha, has been transferred elsewhere.

In conclusion, I would beg to state that I hear, on good and impartial authority, that the people of Mejd-el-Sheins enjoy a reputation for being the most turbulent and unruly of all the Druses in the anti-Lebanon, and that, as often as not, it is they who are the aggressors whenever trouble occurs in that part of the country.

As I am leaving Damascus very shortly, I have instructed Mr. Meshaka to report to your Excellency on this subject as soon as he is in a position to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 332.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 308.) *Constantinople, May 6, 1897.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

MR. GRAVES telegraphs from Erzeroum that orders have been received there to hold in readiness eleven regiments of Hamidieh cavalry to proceed to Constantinople viâ Trebizond.

No. 333.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 10.) *Batoum, April 26, 1897.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that a rumour is current here, and which I have reason to believe is correct, to the effect that the Russian troops stationed in the vicinity of the frontier have been ordered to be prepared to enter Turkish territory, at short notice, for the purpose of assisting the Ottoman forces in quelling any disturbances which may be created by the Kurds in Asia Minor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS

No. 334.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 299.) *Constantinople, April 30, 1897.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, reporting his favourable opinion of the character and intentions of the new Vali, and the settlement of some pending questions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 334.

Vice-Consul Mussa to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 38.) *Adana, April 15, 1897.*
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have exchanged visits with the new Governor-General of Adana, and that the impressions he has given me in these first interviews are most favourable. He appears to be a man of common sense and quick intelligence, extremely anxious to settle amicably and justly any questions placed before him. As he is already endeavouring to get his subordinates into some discipline and ideas of their duties, I have no doubt that false reports will be anonymously sent out against him, and that plotting to remove him will be commenced; I shall keep your Excellency informed.

I have already commenced a satisfactory settlement of several outstanding questions. Thus, in the case of the Indian subject, Taleb Muhamed, the Vali will place him at liberty, I going surety for his non-escape until it is ascertained that Peshawur, the Indian's birth-place, is in English territory; the Vali wishing to ascertain this from Constantinople. I accepted this settlement while informing the Governor-General that Peshawur is within the dominions of Her Majesty.

In the case of the Osmanié church and school building, the Vali stated that the rights of the church and school have to be established, and he will go fully into the matter at once. But as the Government had no just claim whatever on the property, its occupation by the soldiery was decidedly illegal, and he has already sent orders for its

evacuation. I shall now discuss the matter with him so as to establish the right of church and school, and I trust I shall be able to succeed.

I have the honour to request that your Excellency may be so good as to cause the receipt for this property by the Osmanié Protestants, forwarded by me, inclosed in my despatch No. 13 of the 30th January, to be returned to me, as the right of the Protestants to the building will, probably, be disputed.

Matters such as the descent to the plains of labourers for gathering the corn crops, and tending to the cotton, were also mentioned, and already parties are arriving for that work.

Very shortly I trust that all old questions will be satisfactorily concluded, and few new ones should arise in the future, should the Governor-General continue to govern on the lines now being followed by him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 335.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 300.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Mersina, reporting on the state of the district of Payas, which he has recently visited on board Her Majesty's ship "Sybille."

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 335.

Vice-Consul Mussy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 37.)
Sir, *Adana, April 10, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report my return this day from Payas district, on board Her Majesty's ship "Sybille," and to lay before your Excellency the following account of my journey and its results.

Having proceeded in Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" to Payas on the 31st ultimo, I found that the Kaïmakam of that district, who had so neglected his duties up to the time of my last journey to those parts, last February, had been transferred in the same capacity to Osmanié, the Kaïmakam of Osmanié succeeding him at Payas. I am glad, however, to be able to report that the offending official has now been removed altogether, and was to leave this province this day.

His successor at Payas, without being a man of much energy, is at present displaying a desire to put the neglected district in a better state. The lesson of his predecessor's prompt dismissal will, doubtless, prove most beneficial as a warning to him and to other officials of this province.

At the same time, I found that the Muavin of this province, with two other officials, had arrived in Payas district a few days previously, and was making inquiries as to the most urgent needs of the Christian population. He expressed himself willing to receive all representations which the Christians might wish to make to him, and said that he would endeavour to stay in the district until he had placed matters on a satisfactory footing.

As to the lands of the Christians, which had been seized by Moslems towards the close of 1895, and which have never been returned to their owners, he stated that, as these lands were now sown, the best solution, at present, would be to pay a rent for this year to the Christians, and this rent, at the rate of 5 piastres a dunum, was being collected. While assenting to this, I pointed out that the payment of rent was limited

to this year, all property to be restored at the end of the present harvest. Doubtless, a fairer arrangement would have been the immediate restitution of lands with all the crops, but under present strained relations between Christian and Turk in the district, I did not consider it wise to press for this.

I also ascertained that the half battalion, which replaced the previous robbing and pillaging soldiery, is behaving in a more orderly manner.

The Muavin is recommending the transfer of the seat of the Kaimakam from Payas to Chok-Merjümen, a Christian village, surrounded by most of the other important Armenian villages, and this, if carried out, will prove beneficial. Your Excellency will remember that I pointed out, in a previous despatch, that these villages are at present without even a Mudir.

I trust that I may be eventually in a position to give your Excellency a more hopeful account of the state of the Christians of this district, as I hear from many quarters favourable opinions of the new Governor-General of Adana, and I have no doubt that he will endeavour to improve the present miserable condition of these people. I fear, however, that this will prove a very slow matter, even to a man of energy, his predecessor having allowed a state of utter anarchy to exist during his tenure of office.

The present state of the Christians is critical. Being for the most part quite destitute, they are, therefore, without the means of starting any money-making employment.

The farmer classes are without their lands, but they say that even were they again in their hands they have neither oxen, ploughs, nor seed to utilize them. I shall endeavour to obtain an advance for this class from the Agricultural Bank, if any money can be found in that establishment. Then again, men such as shoemakers, blacksmiths, &c., are unable to follow their professions from want of tools and materials, while many who did a good trade carrying fruit to the port of Alexandretta are now horseless, and a new Order has now been issued obliging these carriers to provide passports at an expenditure of 16 piastres a-head. The Moslems inform the Christians that if they accept the rent of their fields they will kill them, keeping them thus in constant dread.

Their state is a desperate one, shut up in their villages without means of gaining a livelihood, never knowing what oppression is going to be next perpetrated upon them.

Your Excellency will perceive from these facts that a state of prosperity for these people, under present circumstances, is very far distant, while in the meantime we might expect to hear of Moslem outrages in those parts at any moment.

The benefit derived from the present visit of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" to the coast, and from the removal of the late Governor-General of Adana and of the Kaimakam of Payas, cannot be over-estimated.

The Government officials are thereby forced to feel that a British Consul has the power to enforce his demands for justice, and much good is certain to be the outcome of your Excellency's action in these matters, while already a change is noticeable in this province.

I shall at once ascertain the desires and the intentions of the new Vali on all questions still unsettled, and shall inform your Excellency on the subject. I need hardly assure your Excellency that I shall do all in my power to act in harmony with him, where possible. I shall ask your Excellency's authority to return to Payas for a few days, shortly, to ascertain that the relief money has not been made a source of greater oppression towards the recipients, and that the Muavin is really acting up to his promises. At the same time I have still to distribute relief to a few outlying villages, and I shall pass through Osmanie on my way, to see some final arrangement made on the church and school question.

I am addressing a separate despatch to your Excellency, on the subject of the distribution of relief in the Payas district during my recent visit. I am persuaded that "Consular inspections," if one can thus designate one's journies, are the very best means of minimizing acts of injustice and oppression, and of convincing Government officials that notes are being taken of their actions, both good and bad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 336.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 10.)

(No. 304.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 4, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 248 of the 12th April, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora respecting the maintenance of order in the vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 336.

Vice-Consul Shipley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 44. Confidential.)

Sir, *Angora, April* 28, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 30 of the 5th instant, transmitting to your Excellency a summary of an official Proclamation published in the "Angora," the local Gazette of the vilayet, enjoining upon the population the necessity of keeping the peace, I have now the honour to report to your Excellency that, from accounts which I continue to receive from different parts of the vilayet, the authorities would appear to be using their best endeavours to carry out the instructions which they have received from Constantinople to maintain order in their respective districts.

At Angora itself the public order has, as far as I have been able to discover, never been seriously threatened, but after the events at Tokat considerable anxiety was felt by those of the Armenians in this town who had friends or relatives at Cesarea lest fresh disturbances should occur in that city; and, in fact, the first advices to hand after my despatch to your Excellency above referred to show that, though everything was outwardly quiet, the greatest apprehensions were felt by the Christian part of the population as to the imminence of a second massacre. The authorities, however, of that town seem to have acted throughout with praiseworthy firmness and energy, and from letters which are just to hand I learn that confidence is being gradually restored, and that Armenians are beginning to attend to their business as usual.

At Yuzgat, for some little time after the Tokat events, the state of affairs appears to have been very serious indeed, the Mussulmans of that district, I learn from several sources, showing unmistakable signs of their readiness to begin fresh disturbances if an opportunity was afforded them, one of the prime movers and abettors, it will hardly surprise your Excellency to hear, being the Mufti of that town.

Here, however, as at Cæsarea, the Mutessarif, Ahmed Edib Bey, appears to have shown throughout a firm and energetic attitude, and I am told, used language to the Mufti of a kind which—during the past two years, at least—persons of his standing had been totally unaccustomed to hear. He, the Mutessarif, in fact, is reported to have told the Mufti plainly that disturbances would be put down by force of arms, and that no distinction would be made between him and any other Turks who might disobey the orders of the Government for the maintenance of peace.

In reporting to your Excellency Ahmed Edib's conduct on this occasion, it should not be forgotten that this is the official (then Mutessarif of Tchorum) whom Mr. Fontana, in his despatch to your Excellency, No. 73, of the 28th November, 1895, refers as having the worst reputation of any functionary in Angora, as being old and decrepit, and most corrupt and fanatical when it suited him to be so. Mr. Richards, in his despatch No. 80 of the 26th September last, also refers to the same official, on his transfer to Yuzgat, in similar terms.

It is felt, therefore, that if an official with the antecedents of Ahmed Edib has acted as he has done, it is because he has received instructions from Constantinople which he did not dare to disobey, and the fact that the Mussulmans could be controlled by the small force at his disposal, shows that they on their part are shrewd enough to be aware of the likely consequences to themselves of acting contrary to the wishes of the Central Government, should the latter happen to be in earnest.

I have gone into the above matter somewhat fully, for although the events at Tokat have been completely thrown into the background by the operations now being engaged in on the Greco-Turkish frontier, to which public, and especially Mussulman, attention is

almost universally directed, the question of maintaining order is still one of paramount importance, and any indication, however slight, that the authorities are showing a disposition to do their duty in this respect cannot fail to be of interest to your Excellency.

I may add, with reference to the more recent situation created at Angora by the operations on the frontier above referred to, that the news of the outbreak of hostilities between Greece and Turkey has, as far as my own personal observation goes, exercised a sobering effect rather than otherwise on Mussulman feeling. It would seem, indeed, though in this respect I speak necessarily with all reserve, as if the difficulties and anxieties in which the Turkish Government may find itself involved are serving to remind Mussulmans that they have certain duties towards their Christian fellow-subjects.

As I had the honour to point out to your Excellency in my despatch No. 12 of the 20th February last, it was with a feeling akin to despondency that the first news of impending hostilities was received by the Turkish population, and this feeling has not entirely vanished, though the fears then entertained of further complications have possibly been lessened, and the bulletins which are now being issued by the authorities announcing Turkish successes have naturally tended to produce a reassuring effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

No. 337.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 306.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, commenting on two accounts of the disorders at Gemerek and Tokat, which had been communicated to me by the Armenian Patriarch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 337.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Tokat, April 26, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to return herewith the two letters forwarded by the Armenian Patriarch, giving details of the disorders at Gemerek and Tokat.

The letter regarding Gemerek is for the most part fiction. The disorders commenced, as I have already stated, by an attack on the church. Three or four Turks entered the church and fired five shots with revolvers. It is not true that the Armenians succeeded in closing the door of the church, nor is it true that the Turks quarrelled among themselves; further, that a Turk, who said he was opposed to a massacre, was wounded by another Turk. Two women and one man, not two, were wounded.

The Armenian who, the letter states, has caused the imprisonment of thirty Armenians, wished to become Mussulman about a year ago, but the Government refused to accept him. There is nothing remarkable in his having caused the imprisonment of thirty Armenians, as the large number of Armenian prisoners is almost entirely due to the vindictive hatred which they bear to each other, but in my case these prisoners have been released. Afterwards some axes and petroleum were found in two Turkish houses. I have no information as to whether or not the Armenians afterwards hastened to the church to return thanks for their deliverance.

As regards the letter, giving details of the disorders at Tokat, it is unnecessary to deny in detail all its misstatements. It is not true that the wounded are dying from day to day, and that the dead now number 200, as stated at the end of the list. Two wounded have died, raising total killed to ninety; of the rest I believe all are out of danger.

It is not true that the inhabitants of a village, "Akhof," were all massacred with the exception of one girl; no one was even wounded. This is a settlement of five Armenian houses, which was pillaged and one house burnt, as I have already stated. I

have taken steps with the local authorities for the protection of these houses, furnished the names of some of the marauders, and sent the villagers back with a sum sufficient to supply them with what is necessary for their houses (40 medjidiés). The inhabitants of Bishkunjik and other villages may have temporarily declared themselves Mussulman, but in any case they had reverted to Christianity before my arrival here.

I have already forwarded most of the other details found in the letter. I do not know from whom these details were obtained, but I beg that no notice may be taken of any information furnished by the Bishop of Tokat, a debauched felon, whose retention here by the Patriarch is a revolting scandal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 338.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 10.)

(No. 307.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 4, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, giving his views as to the character and behaviour of Halil Bey, ex-Vali of Sivas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 338.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Tokat, April 27, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Halil Bey, ex-Vali of Sivas, received a letter from the Palace before his departure, informing him that the Sultan was in no way displeased with him, and that he had no reason to be alarmed on account of his dismissal. In view, therefore, of his probable advancement, I beg to furnish the following information about him.

While at Sivas he incurred the enmity of the Turks, by his indifference to the Mussulman religion, and in any case is in no way a fanatic. He is also a man of liberal ideas, and though usually supposed to be devoted to the Sultan has several times shown that he is opposed to the present system of government, and endeavoured to excuse it by ascribing it to the Sultan's want of experience. He is personally opposed to the massacres, and previously to the disorders at Sivas had collected a large number of Circassians against possible disturbance. Some days before the massacre he no doubt received a definite order for the massacre which he was not strong enough to resist, for he disbanded these Circassians, informing the Circassian, by whose means he had collected them, that the Government would not supply them with arms, and that they were therefore useless. That he is a man absolutely false is shown by his conduct with reference to the massacre at Gurun, where the Armenians defended themselves for two days successfully. The Vali then, by telegram, gave his word that if the Armenians gave up their arms the Government would protect them; as soon as they had done so the massacre commenced. It is to be noted to his credit that in the evening after the massacre at Sivas about 200 Armenians had taken refuge in a khan. The Commandant proposed to the Vali to exterminate them, but the Vali refused and sent a guard to protect them. He has a reputation for honesty, and I have no reason to suppose he ever took a bribe, but he allows every one else to do so, and refuses to take any notice of such acts when his attention is called to them. Besides this he fills every office he can with men of his own, many of them of the worst description, in order to have a more undisputed authority. He is, however, a capable Governor, and in comparison with most Turkish officials, has some sense of justice, and even of humanity. He is the personal enemy of the present Sadrayam, and also of the Minister of the Interior.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 339.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 16.)

(No. 308.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 4, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 94 of the 9th February on the subject of the murder of the Christian Mudvin to the Kaimakam of Charsanjak, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in conformity with the demand of Her Majesty's Embassy, the Court of Cassation has ordered a change of venue of the trial, which will now be held at Kharput.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 340.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 332.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 15, 1897, 12 noon.*

MAJOR BULMAN telegraphing from Tokat reports that the trial of the Mutessarif and the other officials commenced yesterday. Although there are 200 prisoners, the Commission propose to leave everything else to the ordinary Tribunals and return to Constantinople. Major Bulman states that it is imperative that orders should be given for the immediate execution of those condemned to death.

No. 341.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 318.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana respecting the enforced signatures to documents in the Payas district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 341.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 40.)
Sir, *Adana, April 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I and all the other Consuls of this vilayet have received information from the chief men of the Christian villages of the Payas district, stating that the Mouavin of Adana's visit to those parts to restore just government is nothing but a pretence, and that since my departure matters are worse than before my visit. Nothing having been done for them, they are now pressed to sign a document stating that they are perfectly satisfied with the government and their present state. Those who refuse are cast into prison.

I cannot say that I was favourably impressed by what I have seen of the Mouavin, who came to this vilayet with an indifferent reputation.

By the reforms granted up to the present by the Sultan, I am under the impression that the Mouavin of this vilayet should be a Christian.

I shall place the state of the district of Payas before the Vali to-morrow, and shall inform your Excellency of his reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 341.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 41.)
Sir, *Adana, April 22, 1897.*

REFERRING to my despatch No. 40 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have placed the matter fully before the Vali, informing him that all the Consuls have received the same information relative to the enforced signatures to documents. He replied that he had no knowledge of the subject and that such evidence would prove nothing in his eyes as to the real state of the district, and that he intended starting in a few days to inspect, personally, the whole vilayet.

I shall receive information of any fresh occurrences at Payas, and shall take necessary steps accordingly.

I have found the Vali most willing, so far, to settle outstanding questions left by his predecessor, and I trust that this spirit on his part may continue.

I hear, on the other hand, of a feeling of dislike towards him on the part of some Moslems, in consequence of his endeavours to break down the cliques encouraged by the late Vali.

At a juncture like the present troubles towards Christians might result therefrom, and rumours of a disquieting nature are prevalent in Adana, which I trust may prove groundless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 342.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 361.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 23, 1897, 7:55 P.M.*

MAJOR BULMAN telegraphs as follows from Tokat :—

"Yesterday three more prisoners were condemned to death, but the Commission refuses to order the execution of the sentences before the *procès-verbaux* of the trial are returned from Constantinople. The Russian Consul agrees with me, but awaits further instructions, and we have demanded immediate execution from the Commission. The real cause of the delay is that the Commissioners are afraid of the Mussulman population, and wish to leave before the sentences are carried out."

No. 343.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 327.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, transmitting the Mosul news-report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 343.

Acting Consul-General Loch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 42.)
Sir, *Bagdad, April 20, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour very respectfully to submit, for your Excellency's information, copies (in translation) of news-letters from Mr. Nimrood Rassam, British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. LOCH, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 343.

Mr. Rassam to Acting Consul-General Loch.

(No. 12.)
(Translation.)

Mosul, March 24, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that in these days there is a considerable disturbance in the district of Dhok, owing to quarrels between the Kurdish tribes, for the migratory tribe of Artooshiyeh, who are from the Hamidieh troops, with Haji Agha, their Chief and Kaimakam is always attacking the migratory tribe of Owramarah and the tribe of Kahariyeh, and when these tribes attack each other they plunder whatever they want, such as property, grain, and cattle, from the villages they pass by, be their inhabitants Moslem, Christian, or Yezidis, and the principal cause of all these attacks and oppressions is the said Haji Agha, for he, through the influence of his post as Kaimakam and the strength of his tribe, the Hamidieh, who are armed with guns of the Turkish Government, attacked and plundered the following villages, viz.:—

1. Maalthayeh, of which the inhabitants are Christians;
2. Delib, of which the inhabitants are Christians and Yezidis; and
3. The village of Simil, belonging to Saleh-el-Sarhan, who is a Mahommedan, and turned him out of the village, with all its inhabitants, and occupied it.

Besides these he also plundered and reduced to ruin seven other villages in the district of Dhok, and four villages in the district of Sheikhan under Mosul. The following are the names of the villages within the district of Dhok:—

Nizarki, Kavila, Houshik, Kafarki, and Zawah, of which the inhabitants are Islam, and Bazilan, of which the inhabitants are Mahommedans and Yezidis, and Karrana, inhabited by Christians.

The villages belonging to the district of Sheikhan are, namely: Omeri, Rabkah, Bawirsan, and Talfisinh, inhabited by Mahommedans and Yezidis.

Not being satisfied by pillaging and devastating the above villages, he actually became so audacious as to send a portion of his tribe to plunder the village Bakoofa, of which the inhabitants are Arabs, and it is situated near Mosul, only five hours distant.

The inhabitants of this village being taken by fear fled away from their village, abandoning their houses and cultivations, and in spite of all these considerable losses caused and injuries committed by this Haji Agha and his tribe to the people of the country and Government, the local authorities give no ear to complaints, but, to the contrary, afford them protection, for two reasons; one, because he always gives bribes to Valis to protect him and to contradict the complaints made against him; and the other, as he and his tribe belong to the Hamidieh troops, whatever complaints are made against him the authorities do not entertain them, but direct that they should be made to Zaki Pasha, who is the Commander-in-chief of the 4th Corps d'Armée at Arzingan, and in this manner the property of the poor subjects always go to waste, and the daring habit of said Haji Agha of plundering and devastating the populous villages go more and more increasing to the considerable loss of the revenue of the Ottoman Government.

(Signed) NIMROOD RASSAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 343.

Mr. Rassam to Acting Consul-General Loch.

(No. 13.)
(Translation.)

Mosul, April 6, 1897.

ON the 25th March last one Emin Pasha arrived here. He is a 52nd Mir Liva (Major-General) of the 103rd and 104th Regiments of Reserves, belonging to the 26th Division of the 6th Corps d'Armée, and it is rumoured that he is to collect the reserve troops; but he has done nothing yet.

On the 29th March, when I accompanied Mr. Parfit and Miss Macline, &c., to the ruins Al Hadr, and returned on the 2nd instant, I came to know of the unsettled state of matters in the Jezirah (Mesopotamia) and the tumult among the Arabs, owing to forays and hostilities existing between the Shammar tribes themselves, for the Sayeh, the Obeid, and the Afarith branches, &c., have joined together against Sheikh

A'asi, son of Ferhan Pasha, and his tribe, the cause of which is the appointment of A'asi as Sheikh for the Shammar, with an allowance of 20 Turkish liras per month, and they do not wish him to be a Sheikh over them. So A'asi and his tribe have taken flight before them, and A'asi himself is come to Mosul, bringing with him a horse and two mares, worth 200*l.*, which he made a present of to his Excellency the Vali, begging him to give him troops in order to collect taxes from the Arabs; but his real object is to take vengeance from his enemies. The Vali, being unable to do anything of his own self, applied to the Commander-in-chief of the 6th Corps d'Armée for instructions about sending troops to the Arabs, but has hitherto received no answer.

The Mudir of the Bank of Public Works in this vilayet, having received orders from Constantinople, remitted thither all available monies that were in the coffer of that establishment, amounting to 2,700*l.*

Last week, when one of the monks of the convent of Mar Hormuzd was proceeding to his convent, was encountered by certain Kurds on the road and killed by them in the most cruel manner, and they took the money he had with him, about 30*l.* The authorities have hitherto been unable to find out the murderers.

(Signed) NIMROOD RASSAM.

No. 344.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 329.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 14, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch, which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sivas, respecting the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry at Tokat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 344.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)
Sir,

Tokat, May 5, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that the following sentences have been passed on prisoners implicated in the disorders at Tokat:—

Nine have been condemned to death, one to fifteen years' imprisonment, one to thirteen years, six to ten years, and five others to shorter terms of imprisonment. These are for the most part Turks of the lowest class, except three, who have some property and appear to have considerable influence. Among them also is a woman, condemned to five years' imprisonment. A Turk called Hadji Salih, condemned to ten years' imprisonment, is undoubtedly one of the ringleaders. The evidence shows that a band of armed Turks left his house when the disorders commenced, firing two shots as they did so, that they then dispersed over the town, and afterwards returned bringing loot, which they deposited at his house. The ex-Vali of Sivas told me he was one of the most guilty, and he is universally acknowledged to be one of the organizers of the massacre. I am endeavouring to get further evidence against him and trust he may be condemned to death on a fresh charge. A Turk called Mikdad, who is condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment is shown by the clearest evidence to have killed an Armenian in the street with a club. The Commission accept this, but state that he did so without premeditation. The evidence shows that he was seen armed with a club among others similarly armed, before committing the murder, and to pretend that it was done without premeditation is therefore ridiculous. Several prisoners have been released, whom there was evidence enough to condemn, and these men ought to be exiled for the sake of the Armenians, who have been evidence against them. The day for the trial of Mutessarif and other officials is not yet fixed.

The Commission is proceeding with unnecessary slowness, and unless some representations are made to hasten it, the trials will last six months.

In addition to numbers of killed already given, an Armenian was killed on the road to Herek. Another was also killed at a Turkish village, "Andiy," where there are eight Armenian houses, and where also there was some small amount of pillage.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 315.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 330.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, on the desirability of war-ship being stationed at Jeddah and the arrival of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille."

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 315.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Jeddah, April 18, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to my cypher telegram of to-day's date, suggesting the advisability of a ship of war being stationed here at once or at least visiting Jeddah for a while without delay; the ship might also occasionally call in at Suakin or Suez.

I should inform your Excellency that ever since I took up my duties here a certain degree of apprehension has existed among the foreign residents, who are mostly Hellenes (numbering about thirty-five), and it is participated in by the local Consular Body. But up to the present I have not ventured to call attention to this condition, mistrusting in my newness to these parts that I might not be creating useless alarm. The breaking out of war, however, coupled with a not inconsiderable amount of local discontent arising from a variety of causes (as shown elsewhere, but including slackness of trade, due to fewness of pilgrims arriving on account of plague), discontent which is felt also by the Arab tribes and by the people of Mecca, the proximity of a moment of religious exaltation, and lastly, the gross and universal ignorance which attributes the Cretan troubles to foreign intrigue, and believes that Christian Europe is persecuting Moslem Turkey. All these reasons have decided me to lay before your Excellency the desirability of a visit by a British man-of-war or even to offer, if I might venture to do so, some suggestion for a combination for a succession of visits by war-ships of the Powers represented here, of which the chief are Austria, France, Holland, and Russia, during the next few months.

I may mention that strong hints as to the necessity of a war-ship being stationed here have been dropped before me by both my French and Dutch colleagues, hints which derive some authority from past unhappy experiences in Jeddah, and also gain in force from the fact of most foreigners being Hellenes (under French protection, indeed) which, in view of Greco-Turkish war, might possibly conduce in causing the local police or military forces to execute with reluctance the measures ordered for the public tranquillity.

In conclusion, I beg leave to remark that in my humble opinion the military Colonel, Ali Bey, acting here temporarily as Kaimakam, has acted, and is acting with sense and discretion, and though possibly not intimately acquainted with all details of civil business, may be relied upon to maintain public order (in obedience to his superiors' orders) to the best of his ability, and that he has of late been taking all necessary municipal measures to avoid any chance of a disturbance of any kind.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 315.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 28. Confidential.)
Sir, *Jeddah, April 25, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to thank your Excellency most respectfully for the visit of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille" just arrived, and to express my belief that this prompt action on the part of Her Majesty's Government should go far to allay any uneasiness felt by foreigners and participated in by the Consular Body here.

I have, however, the satisfaction of confirming my telegrams addressed to your Excellency in respect of the alertness and of the prudent measures of precaution lately adopted by the local authorities, such as gradually doubling guards and patrols, police measures, and special surveillance over the boatman's guild ("sambukjis").

Indeed, as I have elsewhere had the honour of informing your Excellency, the existing alarm has arisen not so much from any expectations of imminent danger of tumult or disorder (though I need hardly say that the wildest reports are constantly circulated in the bazaar, such as that Ameer Abdur Rahman is proposing a "Jehad," and advocating that Afghans (80,000) fall upon India, &c.) as from the fear that, in case of a serious reverse to the Ottoman army in Greece, some trifling incident or dispute might lead to a serious crisis on account of the not unnatural feeling of hostility, bred of ignorance, between Christian and Mussulman in a place within the "Holy Limits" where foreigners may be held to reside by special permission only, and where they mostly happen to be Orthodox Hellenes, and just at the time of arrival for the pilgrimage.

On Easter Sunday there was, indeed, some slight agitation in the market places after sunset, but the police created a diversion by a number of arrests on one trifling pretext or another. Also, I believe that several turbulent individuals who came here from Mecca next day were promptly stopped, arrested, or turned back. However, it is reported that on the 19th or 20th instant some extraordinary solemn readings of special sacred books or texts were begun in the mosques at Mecca, to be in addition to the regular evening service, and that these are duly attended by the Vali, as representative of the Head of the Faith, and that similar readings or recitings are held here; it is suggested that chance might fall on some singularly inflammatory passage or other some day likely to kindle fanaticism, which gets up in an instant among people so excitable like a hurricane, and is not less mischievous.

My slight acquaintance with the Arabic language and literature entirely preclude my discussing the seriousness of such rumours; but some may think, on the other hand, that they should not be dismissed as mere inventions on the part of ignorant and timid Christians, and a plain distortion of the simple fact of prayers being offered for the success of His Imperial Majesty's arms.

The next point that might be noted here is the sending of a telegram on the evening of the 21st instant intended for publication in England, which might have led people to believe that there was more excitement than actually existed, with already signs of imminent trouble, neglecting to take account of the fact that a real source of danger is also to be traced to a too unguardedly expressed mistrust of those authorities responsible for the public tranquillity. This telegram was suppressed, as I have had the honour of notifying your Excellency.

Though it may be generally foolish and futile to attempt to forecast events, one may anticipate that anxious moments will be again experienced upon the return of the pilgrims from Mecca in about twenty to twenty-five days' time, and possibly again when reaction sets in, with cessation of business, some six or seven weeks later, supposing the Greco-Turkish war to be still continuing.

The application from Jeddah for the presence of a ship of war will not, I trust, be looked upon as a silly cry of "wolf," but may be rather judged as a not excessive prudential measure justified by the circumstances.

In conclusion, I would venture respectfully to submit that though the ostensible occasion of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille's" visit here is given out as showing that she is simply doing temporary patrol work in the Red Sea, the true reason must and will be guessed far and wide, and the lively interest hereby manifested by Her Majesty's Government in contributing its influence (so promptly and efficaciously, and so much ahead of any other European Power known to Arabia), for the purpose of watching that civil order be not disturbed, besides reanimating Hellenic and foreign subjects

generally on these coasts, cannot fail to impress in more or less degree, not only the townspeople within and beyond the sacred territory, and especially British Indians whose numbers and status rank high, but even the Bedouins, whilst it will bring to mind the extent and strength of British naval resources.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 346.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 331.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah respecting the exactions from British Indian pilgrims at Mecca.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 346.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 29.)
Sir, *Jeddah, April 26, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that British Indians have been generous contributers to the local "lane" (war) collection in this town, having collected among themselves and given £T. 335 out of a total not reaching £T. 800.

I believe the sum it was hoped to raise in Hedjaz was 10,000*l.*, being 2,000*l.* here, 6,500*l.* in Mecca, and 1,500*l.* at Medina.

The amount collected here was given voluntarily, and three Notables alone gave nearly 300*l.* This was before the war broke out; but, according to information from Mecca, the authorities since the 18th instant have there been oppressive and vexatious in enforcing payment of this contribution, which was not far forward. The individual sums have been increased, and those who do not at once accede to this compulsory tax are imprisoned or threatened. I believe not only Meccan residents are being pressed beyond their means, but pilgrims are also being harassed to contribute.

The authority of the Grand Shereef is added to the "lane" Commission, as may be gathered from his chief agent being practically, though not formally, its President, but I have not yet entered into correspondence with his Excellency the Vali on the subject, proposing to call his attention to this serious injustice as soon as I shall have a list of complainants' names ready to be submitted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 347.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 333.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 17, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 150 of the 9th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting-Consul at Damascus, reporting the release of the Druse Sheikh from prison.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 347.

Acting Consul Meshaka to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Damascus, May 4, 1897.*

WITH reference to the first paragraph of Mr. Consul Richards' despatch No. 9 of the 1st March last, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Druse Sheikh Hamad Rais has been released from the prison of Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASIF MESHAKA.

No. 348.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 335. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 15, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout respecting the agitation among a certain class in the Lebanon as to the conduct of the present Governor-General Naoum Pasha, and the question of the appointment of his successor.

I entirely concur in Mr. Drummond Hay's opinion as to the undesirability of appointing Selim Effendi Melhame to the Governorship of the Lebanon, not only on account of his being a Syrian, but also on the ground of his bad reputation as regards integrity. He is a hanger-on of the French Embassy, and it is possible that they may support his candidature.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 348.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 27. Confidential.)
Sir, *Beyrout, May 5, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatches of the 17th and 23rd ultimo, transmitting to me, for any observation I may have to offer, copy and translation of a placard reported to have been affixed in the streets and churches of Beyrout, and an anonymous letter, in original, addressed to your Excellency and signed "Le Comité de Réforme du Liban," complaining of Naoum Pasha and the corruption of the members of his staff, and especially of his Secretary, Skender Bey Tueni.

I beg to state, in reply, that the placards in question were affixed on the walls of several houses, but not in such numbers as is stated in the communication signed "Les Chrétiens de Beyrouth et du Liban," and I have good reason for believing that they form part of the base intrigues of a secret but small band of Lebanese, composed principally of Maronites, who are also the authors of the letters signed "Le Comité de Réforme du Liban."

With regard to the members of the so-called "Committee," I beg to refer to my despatch No. 16 of the 3rd March, in which I stated that the majority are persons who held prominent positions in the Lebanon under the Government of Naoum Pasha's predecessor, and to add that I have now grounds for suspecting that a certain influential Maronite Bishop and some of his friends are also implicated.

These persons, who are all working for their personal interests, are aiming either at the overthrow of Naoum Pasha, in order that they may profit by the shuffling of posts consequent on the appointment of a new Governor, or, failing this, at the dismissal of Skender Bey Tueni and his being replaced by a Maronite Secretary.

With regard to the imputations against the Governor-General, that he has neither

energy nor initiative, and that he leaves everything in the hands of his Secretary, I have to state that this impression, which prevails throughout the Lebanon, is due to the fact that Naoum Pasha, although a man of great uprightness and integrity, is of a timid nature, too easily influenced by circumstances and by his advisers.

Skender Bey Tueni is an old and trusted servant of the Lebanon Government, who has held the post he now occupies for nearly thirty years, having served several Governors as Secretary and Political Director, but he has enjoyed an exceptionally favoured position under his present chief.

The charges of peculation and corruption brought against him are the emanations either of articles in the Egyptian newspapers or of anonymous communications to the Representatives of foreign Powers.

He is accused at random of having received bribes for securing the appointments of Kaïmakams and other officials, and of drawing on their salaries for his own benefit, but no one has come forward to support any of these assertions, although it is generally known that all the Consuls interested in the proper administration of the Lebanon are anxious to ascertain the truth.

The only statement that would appear to have some force is the fact that Skender Bey's style of living is not in accordance with his modest salary of about £ T. 360 a-year, but rather with that of a man with four times his income.

It is stated that his private means are also limited.

I believe, however, that Skender Bey has given satisfactory explanations to his chief on this point, and that he is prepared to face any attacks that may be openly directed against him.

Naoum Pasha, with whom I had an interview yesterday, informed me that he was so annoyed with the scurrilous reports that had been circulated regarding Skender Bey that he ordered him to absent himself indefinitely on leave, hoping that persons will be thus encouraged to come forward with their charges. His Excellency also desired to show that the administration of the Lebanon could be carried on without the assistance of Skender Bey.

I informed the Pasha that I feared his action would be generally misconstrued as an admission of doubt on his part as to Skender Bey's innocence, and that he might injure the latter unnecessarily, without benefiting himself and his chances of reappointment as Governor-General.

I therefore advised him to demand official explanations from Skender Bey on all the charges, and, should he not be satisfied with the replies, to institute a formal inquiry into his conduct.

Naoum Pasha appeared to approve my suggestions, and said he would carry them out after the Bairam festival.

I take the opportunity of mentioning to your Excellency that the appointment of a Maronite in the place of Skender Bey Tueni, as Secretary of the Governor-General of the Lebanon, whoever he may be, would be most unadvisable. The post has always been held by a Greek Orthodox, and it would be prejudicial to the maintenance of the equilibrium of the Lebanon if this important office fell into Maronite hands.

Considering the well-known influence of the French Consul-General in the Maronite districts of the mountain, it is surprising that these intrigues against Naoum Pasha and Skender Bey should have been allowed to run their course unchecked.

I am still well aware from personal experience of the power of a Consul-General under such circumstances, as I have been myself besieged by a certain party of Druses who were very anxious to get rid of Naoum Pasha, and especially of the Emir Mustafa Arslan, Kaïmakam of the Shouf. It was only lately that his Excellency expressed his acknowledgments to me for having repressed underhand proceedings on their part.

The Government of the Lebanon under Naoum Pasha has been peacefully conducted, and gave proofs of stability during the disturbed state of the Anti-Lebanon and the Hauran.

Public works have made satisfactory progress considering the limited resources of the Government, but no remarkable improvements have been introduced to signalize Naoum Pasha's administration.

As his Excellency's term of office expires on the 15th August next, and I understand that the question of his reappointment or the selection of a new Governor-General should be decided by the Representatives of the Signatory Powers three months before that date, it is my duty to inform your Excellency that a rumour is

current here that a certain Selim Effendi Melhamé, Minister of Mines and Forests, is working for the post, and being a wealthy man, it is feared that his candidature may be favourably entertained by the Porte. I beg therefore to submit that his appointment would be disastrous to the administration of the Lebanon, as he belongs to an influential Maronite family and is a native of Beyrout.

The names of two other candidates have also been mentioned, viz., Ghurghoor Effendi and Daïnish Effendi, but I conclude that these persons are scarcely qualified to aspire to so high a post, and that their pretensions will not be seriously entertained.

Whatever may be the administrative defects of Naoum Pasha I think that his highly honourable qualities merit his renewal of office unless some candidate should exist who may be considered specially fitted for the post.

The Druses and other minor sects of the Lebanon accuse the present Governor with some justice of a strong bias in favour of the Maronites, and it is a fact that the clergy of that party have never been more powerful than they are now.

During the able administration of the late Rustem Pasha the Maronite ecclesiastics were kept under proper restraint, and it was thus he succeeded in maintaining a fair balance amongst the rival parties in the mountain.

I trust, therefore, that Naoum Pasha or his successor will be instructed by the Imperial Government to avoid showing marked favour towards any particular body.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 349.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May 24.*)

(No. 336.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an extract from a letter which has been communicated to me by the Armenian Patriarch respecting the murder of the Armenian police officer at Malatia, when leading a patrol in the Turkish quarter of the town. I have telegraphed to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput to inquire into and report on the truth of the statements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 349.

Extract from a Letter dated Malatia, April 17 (29), 1897.

(Confidentielle.)

LE 9 (21) Avril, Mercredi, après le coucher du soleil, Vartan Effendi, employé Arménien de la police, se trouvait en patrouille à la tête de six soldats dans le quartier Turc à l'ouest de la ville.

Vers deux heures avant minuit une balle vient le frapper par le dos et le tue à l'instant.

Le Gouvernement avisé par la patrouille a ordonné une enquête. Les médecins du pays ont avisé qu'il était tué par un coup de revolver. Au contraire, le Dr. Hacle, Allemand, a trouvé qu'il était tué par une balle de fusil Martini à 2 mètres de distance. La balle était sortie de la poitrine dans une ligne directe.

Cet incident de Malatia rappelle le fait de Husni Mansour (ou Adianna) de l'attaque contre le policier Ohannes Effendi (Février dernier).

L'enrôlement des Chrétiens comme officiers de la sûreté publique perd ainsi toute sa signification.

No. 350.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 342.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 19, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 331 of the 14th instant respecting the compulsory levying of the war contribution on British Indian residents in Mecca, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Jeddah inclosing correspondence which he has addressed to the Vali of the Hedjaz on the subject. I propose to await the report of the result of Mr. Vice-Consul Mohamed Hussein's visit to Mecca before taking any action in the matter, and I have instructed Mr. Devey that he should not in future, except in cases of urgent necessity, send his Vice-Consul to Mecca without previously asking my authority by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 350.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 31.)
Sir, *Jeddah, May 1, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 29 of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith copies of a letter and telegram sent by me to his Excellency the Vali, the latter is being taken by Dr. Vice-Consul Mohamed Hussein, who leaves this afternoon to present it in person.

I have been unable, as was to be expected, to obtain names of complainants, but think it likely that the British Vice-Consul, when on the spot, may do so. However, the facts as to the excessive charges and the compulsory means used in raising them are well known here, and I confirm all I have written on the subject, save the allegation of these exactions being practised on pilgrims also.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 350.

Consul Devey to Ahmed Ratib Pasha.

Excellency, *Jeddah, May 1, 1897.*

I REGRET having received word from Mecca that British Indians resident in the Holy City have been threatened and imprisoned with a view to compel them to pay subscriptions to the war contribution ("lane;") this cannot but appear to Her Majesty's Government most unjustifiable, for, in the first place, the original conception of the idea of the "lane" collection was that it should be distinctly a voluntary contribution, even for Ottoman subjects, much more so, then, for foreigners residing in Turkey.

It is now understood that a Commission has been appointed to fix the amount that each person shall pay, though this principle cannot be approved in respect of what should be considered a voluntary contribution, yet the chief harm lies in the fact that in some cases a sum has been fixed which is greatly beyond the means of the particular individual to bestow; and then, not considering his inability to pay, you punish his recalcitrancy by threats and imprisonment.

Trusting that after having discussed this subject with Vice-Consul Mohamed Hussein you will be able to find a remedy for this serious grievance, and will be courteous enough to write me an early reply, I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 350.

Consul Devey to Ahmed Ratib Pasha.

(Telegraphic.) *Jeddah, May 1, 1897.*

I THANK your Excellency for yesterday's telegram.

As it is reported that some extraordinary tax of various amounts is being levied on British Indians in Mecca, I would beg your Excellency to suspend measures of compulsion employed in the collection, and allow each to give freely as he may be willing to until Vice-Consul Mahomed Hussien, leaving shortly for the holy pilgrimage, may discuss the subject with you.

No. 351.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 343.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna respecting the threatening attitude of the Mussulmans in Adalia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 351.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Smyrna, May 12, 1897.*

I HAD the honour to telegraph to your Excellency last night that I had received a letter dated the 5th instant from the British Vice-Consul at Adalia, reporting a state of the greatest uneasiness as prevailing in that town and district owing to the threatening attitude of the Mussulman population towards the Christians. The Orthodox church at Elmaly had been set on fire, and an armed band of Turks had attacked the Greeks of Calamaki, in the Caza of Kach, opposite the Island of Castellorizo.

I now beg leave to inclose copy of Mr. Koun's letter and translation of its four inclosures.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 351.

Vice-Consul Koun to Consul Cumberbatch.

Sir, *Adalia, May 5, 1897.*

OWING to the crisis we are going through, I consider it my duty to bring to your knowledge certain rumours which, taking every day more shape and consistency, should not, it seems to me, be disregarded if by so doing great misfortunes may be averted. For some time past a spirit of antagonism and animosity against the Christians has prevailed in this town and its surrounding cazas, which spirit has, since the declaration of war, shown itself more bitter against the Hellenes and, somewhat also, against the English, who they believe are secretly supporting them.

Our Governor, though an excellent man, is old and apathetic, easily led by the fanatics that surround him, and, should any serious outbreak occur, will be unfit to battle with it. The Greeks are not only expelled with rigour, but the few that still

remain are threatened all kinds of extremities if they exceed their delay. A feeling of insecurity prevails in the town, even children are heard uttering threats and warnings to Christians of all denominations, and the police itself seems unable to restrain the excitement that animates the lower classes. As, for instance, on Sunday last a row took place in a Christian quarter where some five or six Mussulmans, by profession porters and boatmen, and belonging to the worst of their class, were drinking in a coffee-house, when the police told them it was time to retire. The revellers refused, and from words came to blows, seriously assaulting and disarming the police, who, when reinforced, would have taken them to prison, but were prevented and retarded in so doing by their own people and women, who called out to them that they were Mussulmans, not Giaours to be taken to prison.

A spirit of antagonism is also shown to me, privately and otherwise, in my relations with the authorities. Up to this I had nothing to complain of, but now, happening at this most inopportune moment to have dealing with them—having to defend the interests of an English subject, Mr. R. Edwards, Sub-Director of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, accused of having stabbed a coldji of the Dette Publique, who, whilst returning from a boar-hunt with his Director and friends, was savagely assaulted by the coldji, supported by a gang of bad characters—the judicial authorities offer most unjustifiable spite and severity towards my subject whilst exonerating all his assailants, and on this affair I shall report to you shortly.

These facts, coupled with the statements of even graver import that reach me on good authority from the surrounding districts, statements which I will briefly relate to you that you may be able to judge of the situation.

Letters from Elmaly received by me and my French colleague, one from an Italian and two from an Austrian subject, both being resident in that place, of which statement and letters please find copies herein, relate the purposely burning of an Orthodox church, and continued threats to massacre the Christians, thereby causing them to live in terror, and apply to us for assistance.

I inclose copy of another letter received by a rayah, from the village of Yelten, in the Nahié of Istanos, informing a friend here of the terror in which they stand through threats of murder by the Mussulmans.

From Calimaki, a small port belonging to our Caza of Kach situated opposite the Island of Castellorizo, comes the following news:

An employé of the Department of Mines and Forests sent word to the surrounding villagers to collect in their numbers and come early at dawn on Easter Day to surround the Orthodox church when all the Christians would be celebrating the Resurrection, and slaughter them wholesale. Through some very fortunate misunderstanding, the villagers came down the next day, Monday, when the Christians, seeing them arriving in numbers and armed, suspected treachery, and immediately dispatched a messenger in a boat at Castellorizo, to summon assistance, meanwhile taking refuge in their houses, where, assisted by some twenty Bulgarians employed in their saw-mills, they defended themselves against the fanatics until the Kaimakam of Castellorizo arrived with zaptiehs and boats, and succeeded in rescuing the Christians, whom he conveyed to Castellorizo; the Kaimakam of Kach also arrived during the night, and, it is reported, restored order and dispersed the villagers. No mention is made of casualties or of pillage.

All this news, which, repeated and exaggerated, excite the Turks, whose feelings are already well stirred by the fanaticism of some of the upper classes, cause much terror and apprehension to the Christians in general, who urgently beg of us protection and assistance.

In my opinion, there is reason to fear some fanatical outbreak, especially if any reverses happen to their arms, or through mistrust of the Powers; and I think the only way this could very probably be averted is by the occasional presence in these ports of a man-of-war, which will effectually cool down the fanatical effervescence of the Mussulmans not only on the littoral but also, to some extent, in the interior of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. A. KEUN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 351.

Letter addressed to French Vice-Consul, Adalia.

(Translation from Turkish, in Greek characters.)

Elmali, April 15 (27), 1897.

AS soon as news of the declaration of war against Greece reached this place, Turkish boys began to say to the Greek boys and women, "We shall shortly massacre the Giaours, and you will be all massacred." Even responsible persons sometimes use the same language, but it would be impossible to prove this (before a Court) as all being of the same mind and intentions, it is not likely that they would give evidence against one another.

Some Greeks reported the matter to the Kaimakam, who, though he assured them that they need not fear any evil, has not issued any Proclamation with the view of calming the excitement of the Mussulman population.

So long as such a Proclamation is withheld we shall always be uneasy and in peril.

As our safety depends on your kind efforts, we earnestly request you to be good enough to exercise your good offices with the competent authorities, in order that the necessary orders may be given to the Kaimakam of Elmali to issue such a Proclamation.

Inclosure 4 in No. 351.

Letter addressed to French Vice-Consul, Adalia.

(Translation.)

Dear Sir, *Elmali, April* 16 (28) 1897.

I BEG to confirm my letter of the 15th (27th) instant.

In the evening of that same day, at about 6 o'clock, the church of St. George, situated at the place called "Kizil temel," ten minutes from the town, was suddenly set on fire and burnt.

On inquiries being made it was ascertained that sticks and bushes had been heaped up around the building. Although it was clearly the work of some malicious Turks, it is, as I suggested in my previous letter, difficult to prove it.

We are expecting all sorts of misdeeds from these ill-disposed persons. It is quite possible that, had we been informed of their incendiary intentions in time, and gone to save the church, we would have been killed too.

The authorities instituted inquiries on the spot, and, having convinced themselves of the premeditated nature of the act, are now searching for the authors; so far, however, without success; and it is doubtful whether they will ever find them out. None of the Christians saw it. They heard two reports of gun firing, and, being frightened, they hid themselves in their houses.

We earnestly request you to protect us from all danger, and to do all that is in your power to cause the arrest of the authors and their due punishment for an example to others similarly minded.

We look upon you, Sir, for the fulfilment of what is needful.

Inclosure 5 in No. 351.

Private Letter to Adalia.

(Translation.) *Yelden, April* 18 (30), 1897.

FIRSTLY, we inquire after your health; secondly, all the Christians here, we appeal to you as one body. Hitherto, we refrained from troubling you. But lately, since the appearance of the Greek question; that is, on account of the expulsion of the Greek subjects from the Ottoman territory, there being some Christian families here, we are being molested and ill-treated.

In our distress we beseech you to go with —— —— to the Bishop and to inform him of this situation. It would be a very good thing if letters could be obtained

from the authorities addressed to the Mukhtars of the villages. Many Christians will bless you and thank you if you could do such a thing. There is much more to write, but

A. B. and all the members of his family send you greetings. He is being persecuted and troubled very much on account of his being Greek. C. is busy with housework, while I am every day fighting and quarrelling in the shop.

We are threatened with such words: "All these wars we are having on account of you; we shall kill you and massacre you."

May God save us!

Inclosure 6 in No. 351.

Letter addressed to the Italian Vice-Consul, Adalia.

(Traduction.)

Elmali, le 18 (30) *Avril*, 1897.

M. le Consul,

MOI, Soussigné, sujet Italien, habitant le Caza d'Elmali, dépendant du Sandjiak de Tekké, j'ai l'honneur de vous exposer très respectueusement que nous apprenons de source certaine que, il y a une vingtaine de jours, quinze à vingt Musulmans, dont quelques-uns attachés au Gouvernement Local et les autres faisant partie de la population du pays, avaient formé un complot dans le but de massacrer tous les Chrétiens d'ici, et quelques-uns d'entre eux avisèrent un Notable, originaire de Crète, du nom de Hassan Agha, habitant du dit caza, de leur plan et lui demandèrent conseil, l'avertissant qu'ils étaient tous d'accord.

Hassan Agha ne les approuva pas et les empêcha d'exécuter leur entreprise en leur exposant que dans le cas où ils tueraient [*sic*] ou vingt-cinq familles Chrétiennes qui se trouvent ici, un Iradé Impérial viendrait ordonnant qu'ils soient tous tués à leur tour.

Les Chrétiens se trouvent en continuel danger, les Turcs répétant à chaque instant qu'ils massacreront tous, jeunes et grands.

Il y a quelques jours, vers les 6 heures du soir, les Turcs ont entouré de broussailles l'église de Saint-Georges et c'est probable que c'étaient eux qui ont mis le feu qui l'a brûlé avec tous les objets de prix qui s'y trouvaient. Les Turcs s'étant cachés autour de l'église avec l'intention de tuer les Chrétiens qui s'approcheraient, ces derniers furent dans l'impossibilité de venir au secours pour sauver l'église ou bien ce qui se trouvait dedans.

Nous ne pouvons avoir aucune confiance au sujet de notre sécurité et nous sommes obligés par conséquent de vous prier de nous prendre, nous et nos biens, sous votre protection.

No. 352

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 305.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 25, 1897, 10 30 A.M.

I REPEAT to your Lordship the following telegrams which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis:—

"No. 43 of the 23rd May.

"I hear that the Kurds at Modeki have fired on the gendarmes who were sent against them. In consequence of orders received from Constantinople a company of soldiers and a mountain gun under the command of a colonel left Bitlis yesterday, and it is said that troops are also proceeding to Modeki from Saird and Mush, making in all a force of nearly two battalions strong."

"No. 44 of the 24th May.

"The troops that left Bitlis two days ago have returned to await the arrival of further forces. It appears that the Kurds killed the Chief of the gendarmes, four officers, and three sergeants, while their own loss is reported to be about twenty-seven."

No. 353.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 345.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 21, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana respecting the situation at Shahr, and the visit of Shakir Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 353.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Adana, May* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that disquieting rumours reach me from the neighbourhood of Shahr, in the extreme north of this province. It would appear that some Moslem villages of the Sivas Vilayet, on the border, near Shahr, were endeavouring to induce the Moslems around that village to join them in pillaging and massacring the Armenian inhabitants. The Muavin of Hadjin, the Christian Kaïmakam, appointed many months ago, not having yet made his appearance, had telegraphed to Adana, and orders had come to establish patrols on the frontier in order to guard against danger from the Sivas side.

Your Excellency will remember that the wretched inhabitants of Shahr were pillaged and robbed of everything they possessed during the disturbances towards the close of 1895, and had to take refuge in Hadjin for many months. During my visit to those parts in April last year I was able to insure their safe return to their half-ruined dwellings. Your Excellency also was so good as to then grant relief to start them in their agricultural and other pursuits. Just as this year's harvest is on the eve of being gathered, I trust that no fresh misfortunes await these poor people.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 353.

Vice-Consul Massy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 51.)
Sir, *Adana, May* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that Shukir Pasha has departed this day for Sivas, *en route*, he states, for Erzeroum, after a visit of only three days to this vilayet.

During our exchange of visits we agreed that the present Governor-General, being an energetic man, it would be well to give him time to put in execution the measures which he might consider most desirable for the just government of the Christian population.

I informed him that, although we had had no massacres here on a large scale, yet there were many matters which required careful and immediate attention. I mentioned that I had renewed reports of discontent from Payas, and disquieting rumours from Shahr.

We must now await the result of the Vali's tour in the vilayet in order to form an opinion as to how his nomination is likely to influence Christian interests. Hussein Hilmi Bey is credited with being somewhat fanatical, but in all matters which I have discussed with him so far, he has evinced a desire to act with justice, and I continue to hear him favourably spoken of from different quarters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. H. H. MASSY.

No. 354.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 346.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 21, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Damascus, reporting the cessation of the disquietude of the Moslem Hauranese.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

P.S.—I am making further inquiries respecting the contents of this despatch, as some of the statements made in it seem to me hard to understand.

P. C.

Inclosure in No. 354.

Acting Consul Meshaka to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Damascus, May 8, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that great disquietude has been for some time prevailing among the Moslem Hauranese, resulting principally from the arbitrary actions of the Mutessarif of the district in attempting to put in force the conscription. They are willing to pay the military exoneration tax as heretofore, even more than usual, being unable to dispense with their men whom they require, partly for the work of their lands, and partly for their protection from the various nomadic tribes surrounding them, and in order to meet the Government dues. They appealed to the vilayet; but seeing that no answer was received, they met at "Daet," and agreed to evacuate the country. This village with some others, in whole or in part, emigrated to the Lejah, leaving behind some of their men to watch their crops.

Four Hauranese Sheikhs, who were considered to have been the first instigators of this resolution, were arrested and sent to Damascus and imprisoned here. This news occasioned the rise in the price of cereals in addition to that which is usual at this time of the year.

On the 5th instant a telegram has been received by the vilayet from the Ministry of the Interior, dated on the day previous, postponing the levy of conscription, pending further instructions, upon the Hauranese, as well as upon the other inhabitants in Syria. This telegram called the Hauranese to a certain extent, and those who had emigrated are expected to return.

The Hauranese Sheikhs here above mentioned are still in prison.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASIF MESHAKA.

No. 355.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 43. Consular.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 21, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Adana, forwarding the account of his expenditure at Payas while distributing relief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 355.

Vice-Consul Mussy to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 49.)
(Extract.) *Adana, May 7, 1897.*

IN my despatch No. 37 of the 10th April I endeavoured to describe the actual state of Payas district, and to inform your Excellency of the steps I had taken in the hope of improving that undesirable situation. I have lost no time in conversing with the present Governor-General on this important matter, and he has expressed his resolve to see justice given to Christians throughout the whole province. We must wait, therefore, to see what measures he takes to carry out this desire.

There remains a sum of 120 liras in my hands to be distributed in some outlying villages as soon as present political events allow of my leaving my head-quarters for this duty. I shall then furnish a special Report on the relief granted, sending receipts from villages for the sum received by me.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the sufferers to whom relief was issued expressed to me their sense of deep gratitude to those whose generous charity had provided the funds, while the present Governor-General stated to me his satisfaction with the steps taken in the distribution, so as in no way to offend the susceptibilities of Government officials.

No. 356.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 347.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 22, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting-Consul at Damascus reporting the release of twenty-six Druse prisoners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 356.

Acting Consul Meshaka to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 26.)
Sir, *Damascus, May 11, 1897.*

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Richards' despatch No. 11, dated the 10th March last, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that twenty-six Druse prisoners from Mejdel Shems and from other villages have been released, that two from Hadar have been enrolled in the military service, and that the remaining prisoners are still awaiting trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASIF MESHAKA.

No. 357.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 354.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 25, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith abstract of a letter addressed by the Sheikh-el-Akkal, the Spiritual Head of the Druses, to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, respecting the present state of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 357.

Translated Abstract of a Letter addressed by the Spiritual Head of the Druses (Sheikh-el-Akkal) to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

DAWID PASHA, first Governor-General of the Lebanon, and all his successors being well aware of the power of the Maronites, supported the minor communities in order to maintain the equilibrium and protect them from injustice.

The present Governor-General has not imitated his predecessors, but favoured the Maronites so that the interests of the other communities have suffered from their influence. Several cases could be cited in support of the above statement. The partial conduct of the Pasha is based on the idea that the French are more useful to him. This is the general state of the Lebanon.

With regard to the Druses in particular, besides the prejudicial effects of the increasing power of the Maronites, they also suffer from the division existing among themselves.

The present Kaimakam of the Shereef, Emir Mustafa Arslan, spares no possible means to humiliate Nessib Bey Gumblad's party, which is far more numerous. The Governor-General gives him full powers and thus facilitates injustice and oppression.

All the officials of the Druse districts down to the lowest class are selected from his own partizans; unlucky is any man belonging to the opposite party who submits a complaint to the Pasha—his petition is merely referred to the Kaimakam and leads either to no result or to acts of oppression.

Nessib Bey Gumblad's party is therefore driven to despair and looks for deliverance on the expiration of the Pasha's term of office.

The Sheikh-el-Akkal draws attention to the present state of things and begs the Consul-General not to believe the promises which are now made by Naoum Pasha with the sole object of securing his re-appointment which, under the present conditions, will be fatal to the Gumblad's party and to the Druses in general, and will increase the Maronite and French influence.

(Signed) MOHAMMED TALIA,
Sheikh-el-Akkal.

Mount Lebanon, April 1897.

No. 358.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 350.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 25, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an extract from a despatch from the Russian Vice-Consul at Van, communicated to me by the Russian Embassy, respecting the banishment from the Vilayet of Van of Hussein Pasha, the Haideranli Kurd mentioned in the inclosure to my despatch No. 39 of the 15th January. It is now stated that he was instrumental in saving large numbers of Armenian villagers in the Caza of Adeljivas during the disturbances of last year. I have instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum and Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van to furnish me with any information they may possess on the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 358.

Extract from a Report by the Russian Vice-Consul at Van, dated April 10 (22), 1897.

A MON passage par le Caza d'Adeljévas (à l'ouest du Lac de Van) où je m'étais arrêté pour la nuit dans un village Arménien, un prêtre et quelques villageois vinrent me trouver. En me parlant des désastres de l'année dernière dans le caza voisin d'Ardjeek, ils me déclarèrent que leur caza est entièrement redevable de sa préservation à Hussein Pacha, ce même Kurde de la tribu des Haideranli qui a été éloigné du Vilayet de Van par ordre du Sultan.

Dès que les désordres ont éclaté à Van, Hussein Pacha s'est immédiatement rendu

à Adeljevas où de concert avec son frère, Sultan Bey, il a protégé plus de trente villages Arméniens du pillage de son frère cadet, Émine Pacha, principal instigateur des désordres dans le Caza d'Ardjeek. Il y a quelques années déjà que Hussein Pacha [? et son frère], sont ennemis et des conflits sanglants ont lieu entre eux. "Si ce n'était Hussein Pacha," me disaient les villageois, "nous aurions tout perdu comme ceux d'Ardjeek. Maintenant nous ne savons que penser! Si de nouveaux désordres commencent nous n'avons plus notre protecteur."

No. 359.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 357.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 26, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 342 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah reporting the satisfactory settlement of the question of the enforced payment of the war contribution by British Indian residents at Mecca.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 359.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 32.)
Sir, *Jeddah, May* 6, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report further in connection with my despatches No. 29 and 31, that Vice-Consul Mohamed Hussain has had an interview with his Excellency Ahmed Ratib Pasha at Mecca and that the Vali has informed me that no pressure was employed to induce British Indians to contribute to the war collection.

The Vice-Consul now writes me declaring himself "quite satisfied that, except the sums of subscription having been fixed for some Indians, no oppressive or coercive measures have been employed, and those who have been asked to pay in this way have refused and have not paid." He considers that neither "the Vali nor the Grand Shereef has any desire to adopt any oppressive measures," and he points to a certain Mufti, a member of the Jane Commission, who was the chief cause of the trouble, and who has been severely reprehended.

The truth of the matter lies, I have reason to believe, in the fact that the Meccan Jane Commission did not, as here was the case, contain a sufficiently large commercial leavening of those well acquainted with their neighbour's resources and qualified to fix reasonable sums to be contributed; moreover, the Defterdar, an able and highly respected officer, died there a little while ago.

But the main point, that British Indians, if they choose to subscribe at all, and some are doing so, shall give entirely freely, is clearly established, and this it will be our duty to watch.

The affair now appears to be settled definitely.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 360.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 358.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 26, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir reporting the receipt by a rich Armenian of a blackmailing letter from an Armenian Revolutionary Committee in Cyprus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 360.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, May* 11, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that one of the richer Armenians in this town brought me a letter which he received last week from Cyprus, demanding, in the name of the "Hunchag," "Troshak," and "Abdag," payment of 20*l*, under threat of denouncing him to the Government.

On my advice he showed the letter to the Vali; and I then sent it to the High Commissioner at Cyprus, in order that the police may be put on the track of the writer. It may be nothing more that a vulgar attempt at blackmail.

On the other hand, Cyprus would be a convenient base for these secret societies to work from; and, if this country is to remain quiet, it is obviously important that every effort should be made to crush them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

No. 361.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received May* 31.)

(No. 359.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 26, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting on the political and general state of Kessab and the villages of the Moussa Dagh district.

I beg to call your Lordship's special attention to Mr. Barnham's remarks respecting the disappearance in that region of the revolutionary spirit formerly existing among the Armenian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 361.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 23.)
Sir, *Aleppo, May* 14, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to communicate to your Excellency the substance of a report which I have received from the Rev. Charles Sanders, of Aintab, upon the state of things at Kessab and in the villages near Moussa Dagh.

On the 1st April I informed your Excellency by telegraph that some among the Armenians who had been released at Aleppo under the general amnesty were giving trouble in the Suedia district. About the same time the Vali sent Mustafa Nedim Effendi, President of the Aleppo Civil Court, to Antioch to inquire and report, and to advise the authorities there and at Suedia.

This official has a considerable knowledge of the people of that region, and the wisdom which he showed in dealing with these questions while at Antioch last year is beyond praise.

As Mr. Sanders shortly afterwards passed through Aleppo on his way to Kessab, I introduced him to the Vali, thinking that his intimate knowledge of all that had passed in that country since the commencement of the Armenian agitation could be safely imparted to such a liberal and intelligent Vali as Raif Pasha, and I further asked him to write me a report on his return.

From Mr. Sanders' account it is clear that there is no political question at Kessab, nor any disorder which cannot at once be removed by ordinary good government.

The Armenian revolutionary spirit appears to be extinct.

There are no Hunchag or other political agents in the neighbourhood, nor would it be possible for them to obtain a hearing, so thoroughly do the villagers understand that they had been deceived. The only trace of these past troubles lies in the bitterness of their feeling towards each other, owing to the treachery with which one or another had betrayed his neighbour into the hands of the Government.

The condition of Kessab is, however, bad in respect to utter insecurity for life and property, owing to the misgovernment of the fanatical Mudir of Ordou, in whose district Kessab lies. Robbery is practically unchecked on the road leading from Kessab to Ordou and Antioch; and, in order to visit Latakia in safety, the villagers are obliged to follow a road which is nearer the sea than the ordinary one, a state of things which makes business practically impossible. Mr. Sanders writes that, on the day of his arrival at Kessab, four Moslems did not hesitate to attack sixty villagers of Kessab, who went that day to Ordou, two hours' distant and the seat of the Mudir. It would seem that in this mountain district the Moslems are allowed to do very much as they like, and are encouraged by the Mudir of Ordou, whose conduct I will bring to the Vali's notice, asking for his removal.

Mr. Sanders makes a marked distinction between the condition of Kessab and that of Joghoun Olouk, Hadji Habibli, and other villages nearer Antioch. Considering the provocation which these Armenians had given from the commencement of the revolutionary movement, they have been treated with remarkable leniency, and Mr. Sanders writes of them that they are now amply protected, that the military officers treat them with great consideration, and they come and go as they please. On the whole, these villagers have not a good character. There is a lawless class of young men growing up among them from whose minds the old idea of the sacredness of human life was quite eradicated by the Hunchag's agents; and if the troops were removed they would be quite ready to join again in political agitation, and provoke disturbances.

Mr. Sanders alludes so slightly to the incident which induced the Vali to send the President of the Civil Court to Antioch that I conclude it was not of great importance.

These villages have received considerable relief in money from England direct—far more than their circumstances deserved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. D. BARNHAM.

No. 362.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(*Received May* 31.)

(D.)
Sir, *Admiralty, May* 27, 1897.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, extracts from a letter dated the 7th instant, from the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Sybille," respecting the state of affairs at Jeddah, and the denial of the Vali of Mecca that any forced war contributions have been exacted from British Indian subjects.

A similar letter has been sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 362.

Captain Russell to Admiral Sir J. Hopkins.

(Extracts.) "*Sybille*," *at Suez, May* 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that, all remaining quiet at Jeddah, I left that port at 10·30 A.M. on the 4th instant.

2. Before leaving I satisfied myself, both by communications with the British Consul, and as far as possible by my personal observation, that everything remained quiet, and that no insult had been offered to, or other demonstration made against, any of the Christian community.

3. The British, French, and Russian Consuls received instructions on the 29th ultimo to undertake the protection (jointly) of Hellenic interests, except those of the Hellenic Catholics, who remain under French protection.

4. Mr. G. P. Devey, British Consul, will conduct the current business of protection with the co-operation and support of his colleagues.

5. The period for the Greeks to quit Jeddah has been extended to the 12th May, but at the time of my departure only two remained.

6. The British Consul informed me that the Vali of Mecca denies that any forced war contributions have been attempted to be exacted from British Indian subjects.

7. Her Majesty's Vice-Consul (a Mahommedan) is now in Mecca for his pilgrimage, and will inquire into the alleged impositions.

* * * * * *

No. 363.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 367.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 2, 1897, 11·10 A.M.*

THE telegram sent me by your Lordship, under No. 255, has not been received here, but I beg to state in reply to your No. 263, that the subject of the Tokat massacres has been submitted to the Council of Ministers who, however, have as yet arrived at no decision. Representations are being made daily by Her Majesty's Embassy, especially respecting the acquittal of officials and the non-confirmation of the death sentences pronounced by the Commission.

My colleagues, to whom I have communicated the information received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, have supported my action.

No. 364.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 366.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 30, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, requesting my sanction for his proposed journey to the Persian frontier, and I beg to recommend Captain Elliot's application to your Lordship's favourable consideration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 364.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Van, May 10, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge your Excellency's telegram of the 9th instant sanctioning my travelling to the Persian frontier.

The object of this journey was, in the first place, to ascertain what were the intentions of the Armenian revolutionists at Selmas, and, if possible, to have an interview with them, and try and dissuade them from any further foolish enterprises; and, secondly, to ascertain how Mr. Allen, who is buying cattle, for relief work, in Persia, was getting on.

The day after sanction was received news came that Mr. Allen was returning from Persia with 350 cattle that he had purchased.

It appeared to me that if Mr. Allen were to have confirmed the report current here, that the revolutionists had left Persia, there would be no further object in my going there.

I went, however, on the 6th instant to Ardjik, about 20 miles from here on the road to Kottur, to meet the cattle and arrange for their being branded and looked after till properly rested and ready to be distributed to the villages where it was decided to send them.

The cattle, 341 in number (11 had been left sick in Serai), arrived on the 7th; but Mr. Allen was not with them, having returned to Persia to continue buying.

I arranged with the Mudir of Ardjik for the care of the cattle, and returned to Van that day, going round by Karakunduz to get an idea of the state of the country lying north of the Ardjik Lake.

I have it from official sources here that the revolutionists are contemplating sending armed bands across the frontier to attack the Kurds.

There is every reason to fear that if this is done the latter may wreak their vengeance on the defenceless Armenian villagers.

There is also some likelihood of cattle from Persia being stopped at the frontier, owing to reported cattle plague in that country.

The reasons for my journey to Persia appear therefore to exist more strongly than ever.

I propose starting on the 11th instant.

I beg your Excellency will sanction the journey to Ardjik on the 6th and 7th instant.

A report on the state of the country there is included in my general report on the state of the vilayet.

I also propose, with your Lordship's sanction, for which I shall probably telegraph, to make the following journies as early as possible:—

1. To Ardjisch and Adeljivas, north of Lake Van.
2. To Mukkusas and Gurtchegan, south of Lake Van.
3. To Hekkiari, Shattak, and Nordost, south-east of Lake Van.

These journies I consider necessary to enable me to form an idea of the real state of affairs in the district. Where I have been able to verify reports brought to me, I have almost invariably found them exaggerated and sometimes entirely false. I hope also to succeed in reassuring the Armenian villagers, and may be able to induce the Kurds to protect and help them.

The visit to Hekkiari is most important, as there is some fear that the Nestorians are intriguing with the Armenian revolutionists.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 365.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 368.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 1, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing the Budget for the vilayet for 1896, with some observations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 365.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 17, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency a copy of the Budget of the Erzeroum Vilayet for the year 1896, which has just been published in the Salnamé of the vilayet, showing a total revenue of 24,232,181 piastres, and expenditure 10,116,150 piastres, in which, however, by far the largest item, namely, that for military charges, which figured in the Budget for 1894 for 15,000,000 piastres, is not included.

In comparing this Budget with the last one published, that for 1894, copy of which was inclosed in my despatch to your Excellency, No. 9, of the 14th January, 1895, it will be seen that there is a falling-off in revenue of 8,431,054 piastres, almost the whole of which is accounted for under the head of Tithes, which shows a diminution of 7,898,783 piastres. This falling-off is attributed partly to the low prices of the past season, and partly to the application for the first time, under Article 31 of the Reform Scheme of October 1895, of the principle of adjudicating the tithes in small lots.

The result of this measure so far appears to have been to discourage the large tithe farmers who were in the habit of buying the tithes of a whole district *en bloc*, and in the absence of their competition the revenue realized has been materially reduced.

The receipts under "verghi," sheep tax, and military exemption of Christians are maintained almost at the same figure. It is, however, almost incredible that this last

source of revenue should be as productive as ever after the shrinkage of the Christian population through massacre and emigration by some 20 per cent., and the material ruin of the remainder.

On the expenditure side of the account, again, credit is taken for sums which would suffice to pay the gendarmerie and police forces in full, whereas it is notorious that they have been, and still are, many months in arrears of salary. These circumstances only confirm me in the opinion that this budgetary statement is untrustworthy, and that the study of it throws no useful light upon the real state of the vilayet's finances, which are undoubtedly seriously embarrassed, though far from being in so hopeless a condition as those of the neighbouring vilayets of Van, Bitlis, and Kharput.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 365.

BUDGET of Erzeroum Vilayet for 1896.

Receipts.	Piastres.	Expenditure.	Piastres.
Verghi	3,858,930	Legal Department—	
Licensing tax ("patente")	816,228	Sheriyé	404,064
Military exemption tax	2,514,846	Adliyé	915,340
Sheep tax	4,471,865	Department of Interior	1,849,760
Tithe	11,251,842	Department of Finance	996,405
Mines and forests	136,200	Department of Forests, &c. ..	125,050
Tapou and transfers	276,963	Gendarmerie	3,716,099
Revenue of State properties ..	480	Police	434,590
Revenue of Law Courts	309,099	Various annuities	387,696
Sundry	595,733	Commutation of various mortmain and feudal rights	133,974
		Havalés	852,372
Total	24,232,181	Total	10,116,150

No. 366.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 369.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 1, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 240 of the 8th April, respecting the appointment of Ziwer Pasha as Military Commandant of Jerusalem, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the collective remonstrance of the six Embassies has been successful in obtaining his removal. He has been transferred from Jerusalem to Tripoli in Syria, and a successor appointed in his place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 367.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 370.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 1, 1897.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 365 of the 25th May, respecting the defeat of a force of gendarmes sent against the Kurds at Modeki (Bitlis), I have the honour to report that according to information communicated to me by the Grand Vizier, the Kaïmakam of Modeki was instructed, for purposes of taxation, to count the sheep belonging to the Kurds in the district, and that on his attempting to do so the Kurds attacked and killed him, together with a gendarme. Thereupon some soldiers and

gendarmes were dispatched against the Kurds, but were compelled to retire with the loss of the Colonel of the Gendarmerie, two Captains, and two Lieutenants.

The Commander-in-chief of the Army Corps blames the Vali for not having sent a stronger force at first, and has decided to dispatch several battalions in order to chastise the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 368.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 373.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 2, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that I received a telegram from Captain Elliot on the 20th May, in which he stated that during his visit to the Persian frontier he interviewed some Armenian revolutionists who were assembling in Selmas. Although they themselves denied that anything was in contemplation, he was informed from other sources that they intended to attack the Kurds in the beginning of June.

I accordingly caused representations to be made to the Foreign Minister. In reply, Tewfik Pasha stated that similar information had reached him from the Turkish Consul at Selmas, and he had instructed the Ambassador at Tehran to inquire of the Persian Government whether they had any knowledge of the doings of the Armenian revolutionists.

His Excellency received a reply to the effect that these Armenians had never shown any activity, nor did it appear likely that they would do so now.

The Turkish Government will probably take certain precautionary measures.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 369.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 374.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 2, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, being a general report on the state of the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 369.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 16.)
Sir, *Van, May* 10, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the state of this vilayet:—

The season this year has been exceptionally late. The snow remained on the plain round the city till well into April, and has disappeared but a very short time from the higher lying lands a little away from the lake.

In consequence of this the villagers who had taken refuge in Van during the winter are only just being sent off to their homes.

The Vali here has worked very hard to reassure them. He sent for the chief men of the Kurds and the influential Turks in the district and enjoined them to protect the Christian villagers and help them on terms which he has laid down. These are briefly that the Mahommedans are to supply cattle and seed and give all the assistance in their power, and are to take half the harvest.

To this plan it may be objected, first, that in the case of the Kurds, the cattle they will lend will most probably be those stolen last year during the disturbances that took place consequent on the attempts of the Armenian revolutionists to seize Van, and that the cattle so stolen ought to be restored; secondly, the risk that the need of the Christian population of the villages may be made use of to get them hopelessly in debt to those who may accommodate them now, and that their condition may eventually become little better than that of serfs.

There is, however, but a choice of evils.

The Government at present are utterly powerless to coerce the Kurds. If they attempt to do so, not only will they get no assistance from them and thus lose the present opportunity of getting some sowing done, but they will provoke them to commit excesses for which it is impossible to exact retribution. As regards the second objection, should the day ever come when this province will be supplied with money sufficient to enable the Government to be carried on, the case of the indebtedness of the villagers must form a subject for special consideration.

As the season is now getting too far advanced for wheat, the people are to be encouraged to sow millet, rye, and potatoes, for which there is still time.

Three hundred and fifty-two head of cattle have arrived from Persia and they will be lent to those villages, which, owing to the possibility of protecting them, may be able to make the best use of them.

On my journey round the Ardjek Lake on the 6th and 7th instant I noticed that a certain amount of ploughing was going on, but not, I believe, anything like the amount usual and necessary to properly support the population. In the neighbourhood of Ardjek village ploughs, cattle, and, I believe, seed are being supplied by a Mahommedan landowner at the instance of the Vali of Van. North of the Ardjek Lake in the fields owned by the Karakunduz villagers, I estimated about thirty ploughs were at work. The cattle in all instances where I made inquiries belonged to Kurds in the neighbourhood. The Armenian villagers of Karakunduz had looked after the beasts through the winter, and in return were allowed to use them for ploughing. In some cases the Kurds had supplied seed and had stipulated that they were to have half the harvest. Wheat, barley, and rye were being sown.

It is proposed to lend these two villages as many yoke of oxen from the relief as they can find ploughs for, as their fields are large and fertile, the Kurds in the neighbourhood appear well disposed, and there is every prospect of the villagers being allowed to cultivate unmolested.

In many places throughout the vilayet a certain amount of sowing was done last autumn, but I am told only about a-quarter that usual in other years.

Unless confidence can be restored and the people got to work to cultivate as much land as possible while there is yet time, there is every prospect of great scarcity, if not of actual famine, during the coming winter and the spring following.

I think it possible, however, that, if the measures now being taken prove successful, serious distress may be averted, though prices are bound to rise.

The first essential is a feeling of security and confidence in the ability of the Government to protect the people from outrage. Extravagant and alarming rumours are constantly in circulation in the city. The supposed intentions of the Armenian revolutionists in Persia are a constant source of uneasiness. The Vali has done all he can to impress on the Kurds and Turks the cruelty and impolicy of visiting the folly of these men on their unoffending co-religionists.

I hope that should any trouble occur it may be localized. There is, however, a ruffianly element always on the look-out for a pretext to loot and create disturbance.

The General Officer Commanding the division here has, I understand, been authorized to take any steps he considers the situation requires, without reference to the Army Corps Commander at Erzingian. This ought to be sufficient for any emergency in the city itself.

The administration is, however, most seriously crippled for want of money.

Even the highest officials have not been paid for as much as eight months. The patience of the soldiers and zaptiehs appears to me marvellous under the circumstances.

A distribution of a small amount of pay (about a medjidieh a-head) for privates is about to be made to enable them to celebrate the Kourban Baïram.

Owing to this want of money the Government is unable to do much to enforce order in the districts. The forbearance of the Kurds has to be sought for, instead of their being forced to respect the law.

After making the journies I propose about the vilayet, I will report further to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 370.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 375.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 2, 1897.*

IN the early part of the year, in consequence of various complaints received by Her Majesty's Embassy, I made representations to the Sublime Porte requesting that orders should be sent to the Vali of Bitlis to give facilities for the immediate return to Christianity of those Armenians who had adopted Islam through fear of death at the time of the massacres, but who were then anxious to revert to their original religion. I received, in reply, assurances that complete religious liberty existed in the Vilayet of Bitlis, and that all converts to Islam were at liberty to revert to Christianity.

I referred this reply of the Porte to Mr. Monahan for his observations, and I now have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a Memorandum received from him, from which it would appear that the recent conduct of the authorities in this matter has been satisfactory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 370.

Memorandum by Mr. Monahan.

Forced Conversions in Bitlis Vilayet.—Forced conversions took place in the winter of 1895 in the Bitlis, Sairt, and Guenj Sandjaks of the vilayet.

Bitlis Vilayet.—In Bitlis town two or three persons were converted shortly after the massacre. They appear to have been recognized as Mussulmans by the Government, but it is not clear that fear was the reason of their conversion. No other persons were converted in the town.

In Khizan Caza about twenty villages turned Mussulman. But the Mollahs left these villages in the early part of this year, and there are no mosques in them. The villagers are, however, unable as yet to practise the Christian religion in their villages. None of them have been recognized by the Government as Mussulmans. When they come to Bitlis town they openly bear Armenian names and go about as Armenians. When in their villages they, for fear of the Kurds, do not profess Christianity. But they say themselves that the Kaïmakam of Khizan invites them to profess Christianity without fear. Many of the inhabitants of these twenty villages have emigrated to neighbouring cazas, in which they openly profess Christianity.

Sairt Sandjak.—In the town of Sairt the few who turned Mussulman have gone back to Christianity, and are practising their religion without fear.

According to my incomplete information from Shirvan Caza, many Jacobite and Armenian Christians embraced Islamism under circumstances of great terror. But I have not heard of any case in which the Turkish authorities have recognized any of them as Mussulmans. On the contrary, there have been cases in which the Local Government at Sairt has sent back refugees to their villages with the order to remain Christian. The

Kurds, however, who are in a great majority in Shirvan, are still terrorizing the people so that they are unable to go openly to their churches, and many still remain ostensibly Mussulmans.

As to the Garzan Caza, Christians from Sairt have lately arrived here with the information that only the few houses in Gulemassian mentioned in my despatch No. 53 of the 4th October, 1896, remain Mussulman, the rest of the converted persons in the caza having all returned to Christianity.

The people of the Aro Caza hardly ever come to Bitlis, as it is a remote Arab-speaking caza, but according to my latest information one large village (Deh) and one small village in the caza still profess Islamism.

Guenj Sandjak.—The people of this sandjak are in communication chiefly with Diarbekir, and I have little or no information about them.

No. 370*.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 11.)

(No. 401.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 11, 1897, 11·15 A.M.

MAJOR BULMAN telegraphed yesterday from Tokat as follows, on the subject of my telegram No. 387 to your Lordship:—

"I have the honour to report that no orders for execution have yet been received here.

"I propose to return to Sivas on 12th June unless you wish me to remain. What does your Excellency wish?"

I have telegraphed the following reply:—

"Your departure may destroy, I fear, all chance of the executions being carried out. The Council of Ministers has passed the sentences, but the Ambassadors are still waiting for the requisite sanction of the Sultan."

No. 371.

Consul Stevens to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 13.)

(No. 12.)
Batoum, May 28, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a few remarks on the subject of the measures adopted by the Armenian Benevolent Society of the Trans-Caucasus for the relief of distressed refugee Armenians from Turkey.

The details as to the relief work were kindly furnished me by one of the leading members of the above-mentioned Society.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. STEVENS.

Inclosure in No. 371.

Memorandum.

IN the autumn of 1895, as soon as the news of the massacres at Trebizond reached Batoum, some of the local Armenians, foreseeing a probable influx of refugees, formed a small Committee with a view to rendering assistance; they put down 500 rupees (about 50*l.*) as a nucleus of a fund, and then applied to the Police-

master, stating that they wished to be allowed to form a regular Committee, and take prompt steps to organize assistance for those of their fellow-countrymen who would, undoubtedly, shortly begin to arrive at Batoum. The Police-master refused to allow them to do anything of the kind, and they then sent their priest and one of their churchwardens to interview the Governor of Kutais, and to request that they might be allowed to take measures for the relief of their distressed co-religionists.

The Governor of Kutais refused to allow anything to be done, and told them that the relief of their countrymen was no concern of his or of theirs, and that they had better attend to their own business, and leave the matter to their friends the English, who had got them into the mess.

They then telegraphed to the Armenian Archbishop at Tiflis, who, together with some of the most influential Armenian residents of the town, interviewed General Sheremetieff, the then Governor-General of the Caucasus, who took a more humane view of the question, and unofficially authorized relief to be organized by the Caucasian Armenian Benevolent Society of Tiflis, which has its branches in all the principal towns of the Caucasus. He at the same time wrote to the Governor of Kutais to that effect.

The Central Committee of the Society at Tiflis at once wired the result of the interview with the Governor-General to the branch of the Society here, and placed a sum of 1,500 rupees at its disposal to meet immediate requirements.

The local Committee here at once took steps to establish a properly organized system of relief, each individual application being carefully inquired into, and such assistance as the case required was afforded to those in distress. Food was given, and lodging provided to those who were in a state of absolute destitution; those who had friends or relations in other parts of the Caucasus were provided with the means of joining them; they were given, when required, food, and they were sent on by the Committee, by rail or otherwise, to the town or place nearest to their destination, at which the Committee had correspondents, where they were provided with funds, and sent on to their final destinations. Many were sent to the various monasteries in the southern parts of the Trans-Caucasus, that of Etchmiadzin providing shelter for several hundreds of them. A considerable number were also distributed amongst the various Armenian villages and colonies in the neighbourhood of Kars and Erivan. Those who escaped from the district of Erzeroum across the Russo-Turkish frontier were harboured in the villages near the first-mentioned town, and those who escaped across the Persian frontier were quartered chiefly in the neighbourhood of Erivan, Alexandropol, and other parts of the Trans-Caucasus. Many of those who knew a trade were provided with the necessary tools, and were sent to those parts of the country where work of the particular class that each individual was acquainted with was to be found. Those who belonged to the agricultural classes were sent to districts where this class of labour was forthcoming; many who were familiar with the culture of the tobacco plant were sent to those parts of the Caucasus, chiefly on the Black Sea littoral, where this plant is cultivated, such as Soukhoum, Adler, Gudaut, Tuapse, &c. Thousands were taken on at the various factories and works which are owned by Armenians throughout the Caucasus. Many were taken into offices and shops, vacancies being created for them, or supernumerary posts being given them. Many who had been accustomed to that class of employment were set up with stocks-in-trade as pedlars and hawkers. Others were set up as small shop-keepers, the Society renting premises for them, and providing them with a stock-in-trade and a small capital. Those who were started in this manner not only undertook to repay the expenses incurred on their behalf by the Society so soon as their earnings exceeded what was needful to meet their own wants, but also to contribute a share of their profits to the funds of the Society once they had paid off the advances made to them. Many who were masons, bricklayers, carpenters, &c., were given work on public and other buildings which were in course of construction by Armenian contractors or owners. As a matter of fact, in several places the erection of Armenian churches and schools was decided on and commenced in order to provide work for refugee artisans who were competent for such work. All want and misery was relieved as it came forward and the wretched people arrived.

It would appear that the Society was able to cope fully with the strain thrown upon its resources. The wealthy Armenians, not only of the Caucasus, but also those of St. Petersburgh, Moscow, Nahichevan-on-Don, and, in fact, throughout the

whole of Russia, came forward handsomely and contributed liberally, and in many cases legacies of more or less large amounts have been bequeathed to the Society. On the other hand, those of limited means contributed to the fullest extent that their resources would allow of.

In the Caucasus there have been no cases of actual want or misery which have gone unrelieved. All urgent needs have been promptly met and efficiently dealt with by the various branches of the Armenian Benevolent Society. Medical aid and proper accommodation has been provided for the lying-in of women, and small portions, in the way of linen, clothes, furniture, &c., have been given to young women on the occasion of their marriage. Not a single case of death can be traced to exposure or starvation. Upwards of 9,000 rupees has been spent by the Society in relief at Batoum, and forty-five families are still on the hands of the Committee here, whilst at Tiflis, Kars, Alexandropol, Erivan, Baku, Igdir, &c., over 100,000 rupees have been applied to the relief of the refugees.

In January 1897, *i.e.*, about fifteen months after the massacres, an Imperial telegraphic Decree was issued ordering that an official subscription in aid of the Armenians should be opened throughout the Empire; by this time, however, the actual crisis had passed, and charity was in full swing and dealing effectually with all needs as they came to hand. It appears, however, that a sum of about 6,000 rupees was collected throughout Russia and was remitted to the Governor-General of the Caucasus, but what became of it or how it was disposed of is unknown, as no accounts have been published.

The Armenians of this country and others are strictly forbidden to send any money abroad for distribution amongst the Armenians in Turkey except through the Russian Consulates.

In the opinion of leading members of the Armenian community in the Trans-Caucasus, with whom I have had an opportunity of conversing on the subject, the hostile attitude originally (*i.e.*, immediately after massacres) adopted by the Russian Government towards the Armenians, whether subjects of this country or refugees from Turkey, must be attributed to a combination of motives, the leading points of which may be briefly outlined as follows:—

1. A strong feeling of distrust as to the whole Armenian movement, due to the fact of its having been fostered in England. Russia undoubtedly looked on it as a deep political move on the part of Great Britain, the exact object of which she was unable to fathom.

2. Russia having constituted herself as the sole guardian of the rights and interests of the Christians in the East, was undoubtedly extremely nettled at the fact that a race belonging to the Orthodox Church should look for aid to any other nation, and more especially to England.

3. A desire to get to the bottom of what was going on amongst the Armenians in the Caucasus, whom she strongly suspected were acting under the influence of English agents whom she believed had been sent out here to stir up sedition, and who were making free use, for political purposes, of large funds which she believed they had at their disposal. The severe police and administrative measures adopted sufficed to prove that the above supposition was groundless.

4. Although she could at any time have occupied the affected districts in Turkey, she was for various reasons undesirous of doing so, and she saw a cheap opportunity of proving to Europe her respect for Treaty obligations, and that she had no wish for territorial aggrandizement in that direction. She was also probably influenced in this matter by the fear of complications with other Powers consequent on the provisions of the Berlin Treaty, and more especially with England in consequence of the terms of the Cyprus Convention.

Judging from events, it is evident that the policy of the Russian Government with regard to the Armenian question has of late undergone a complete change, in fact, one may almost say a reversal. The authorities have ceased to molest or persecute the Armenians in the Caucasus. All those Armenians who were arrested on suspicion have been released from prison. There are some who were exiled who have not yet returned, but it is expected that they will shortly arrive as all charges against them have been either formally withdrawn or allowed to drop. Not a single Armenian has been arrested in the Caucasus for political reasons within the last three months. It may be mentioned in this connection that all the midnight domiciliary visits and arrests which are of such frequent occurrence until within the last few months, failed to prove the existence of any treasonable plots or seditious

conspiracy on the part of the Armenians, nor were the authorities able to prove that foreign agencies were at work in this part of the country.

The number of Armenian refugees from Turkey at present in the Trans-Caucasus is set down at fully 50,000.

No. 372.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 19.*)

(No. 379.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I approved a suggestion made by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis that he should visit Guenj and Sasun in order to inspect and control the distribution of Armenian relief in those districts.

Mr. Crow started on the 6th June and will be absent for about twenty days. He has taken Cypher (E) with him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 373.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June 19.*)

(No. 380.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 7, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch, which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, respecting the permission accorded to Armenian refugees returning to Marash, Urfa, &c., to practice Christianity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 373.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Aleppo, May 24, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that about 100 Armenian refugees, who have been for many months past a charge upon the Armenian Vicar of Aleppo, received notice last week from the police that they should at once return to their homes. Several of them came to the Consulate to ask me to obtain permission to remain, because, having at the time of the massacres, embraced Islam, they were afraid to return; I thought it, therefore, advisable to call upon the Vali and request that, in the event of these people returning to their homes, orders should be sent to the Mutessarifs of Marash and Urfa, and the Kaimakams of Aintab and Birejik, that they should be allowed in future full liberty to follow their own religion.

The Vali replied that the return of these Armenians to their homes was enforced at the request of the Armenian Vicar, who had informed him that the funds at his disposal were insufficient to support them longer; but his Excellency promised that every means should be taken to insure their safety, and I have since received a letter from him stating that both telegraphic and written instructions had been sent to the Governors of those towns to the desired effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 374.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 19.)

(No. 381.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, respecting the arrest at Marash of twenty Armenians in connection with the visit of the Hunchag agent.

I am making representations to the Grand Vizier on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 374.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Aleppo, May* 25, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that about three weeks ago twenty Armenians were arrested and thrown into prison at Marash on a charge of having communicated with and harboured a supposed Hunchag agent. This person, who appears to have come from Payas and Tchonkmerdziven in the Adana Vilayet, has eluded the hands of the police, and the accounts I have received of his appearance and proceedings are of the vaguest character.

Feeling that the justice of these arrests was open to question, I spoke on the subject both to the Vali and to Ali Mohsin Pasha, both of whom treated the matter as too serious to be overlooked, and informed me that some arrests of Armenians had also taken place in the Vilayet of Adana on the same account.

As the authorities have allowed the supposed Hunchag agent to escape, these poor people will not be brought to trial, but will presumably remain in prison an indefinite period.

In connection with the Government of Marash I have to report that Salih Pasha, of whom much complaint was heard, even from the lips of the authorities here, has been replaced, as Mutessarif, by Arifé Pasha, a comparatively young man, who formerly held a minor appointment in Aleppo, and bears a good character.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 375.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 19.)

(No. 382.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 7, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo respecting disturbances which have taken place near Andrin in connection with the Hunchagists.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 375.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 28.)
Sir, *Aleppo, May* 27, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, with reference to my despatch No. 25 of the 26th instant, that, from information now to hand, I learn that the suspected presence of Hunchag agents in the Sandjak of Marash has provoked disturbances near Andrin.

At Derdatch, a village in the Caza of Andrin, a number of armed Moslems came down upon the villagers and accused them of having four Hunchagists in their midst, and after threats of burning and killing, carried off seven of the chief men of the village to Andrin, where they are now imprisoned. In the same caza, and about the same time (three weeks ago), two small bands of Turks attacked the villages of Tavutlu and Anajuk, and in each place outraged a young Armenian bride. Last week an Armenian, named Arakel Semerdjian, was murdered in the village of Jannustil, in the Marash plain. A Turk is under arrest charged with the crime. Mr. Macallum writes that the Armenians at Marash and the villages round are very uneasy; but I have great confidence that the Vali is carefully watching the situation and will prevent any serious trouble.

His Excellency has done well at Aintab, where four Turks of the lower orders having used threats of massacre in a public café, he caused them to be seized and sent off to Rikka at a moment's notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 376.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 19.)

(No. 385.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 8, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, respecting outrages by Ageha Dagh Kurds and officials at Malatia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 376.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 25.)
Sir, *Kharput, May* 20, 1897.

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit extract from a letter dated from Argha, the chief town of the Ageha Dagh Caza, and addressed to me by a European who is in constant contact with the Turks, and is, moreover, both intelligent and reliable.

Feuds among the tribal Kurds of the district in question are scarcely of a nature to materially affect the interests of the Christians in this vilayet. But the lives and honour of the Malatia Armenians—as well as such remnant of property as they may still call their own—will undoubtedly remain in peril so long as the ruffians Haridji Oglou Abdullah and Hadji Oglou Ali Bey (referred to by my correspondent and in my despatch to your Excellency No. 41, of the 28th August last) continue to infest the town long since defiled by their hideous crimes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 376.

Extract from Letter addressed to Vice-Consul Fontana.

Argha, le 17 *Avril*, 1897.

. . . . DANS les villages du rayon que je viens de parcourir une certaine tranquillité existe pour le moment. Le seul fait à relater c'est les meurtres qui se commettent journellement entre Kurdes. Ainsi, avant une quinzaine de jours, une véritable petite bataille a eu lieu entre deux Achirets du Caza de Chiror, à la suite de laquelle une trentaine de personnes trouvèrent la mort.

Quant à Malatia, un calme relatif y règne; mais tant que le Mutessarif, qui me paraît être un assez brave homme, sera dirigé par des personnes telles que Mourad Bey, le Commandant des Rédifs dans la susdite localité, Haridji Abdullah Effendi, Ali Bey et Abdullah Aga, aucune sécurité réelle ne pourra exister.

Les susdits individus ont organisé—à défaut de massacres—une véritable société de brigandage en dépouillant les malheureux habitants tant par la terrorisation que par d'autres moyens illégaux et inavouables.

A la tête de cette association se trouve le Lieutenant-Colonel Mourad Bey, et si on réussissait à le faire déplacer ce serait rendre un véritable service à la contrée.

Aujourd'hui encore le dit Mourad Bey se promène dans une voiture appartenant à un riche Arménien de Ghurun, qu'il avait fait massacrer et dont il avait volé le cabriolet. Quant aux autres méfaits qu'a commis et que commet journellement Mourad Bey, on ne pourrait guère les compter. Et dire que voilà le triste personnage qui est chargé de la sécurité, &c., de Malatia.

No. 377.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 386.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 8, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Damascus, reporting that permits have at length been obtained for Irish Presbyterian schools in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 377.

Acting Consul Meshaka to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 29.)
Sir, *Damascus, May 28, 1897.*

WITH reference to parts of the 3rd and 4th paragraphs of Mr. Consul Eyres's despatch No. 1 of the 11th January last,* reporting the refusal of both the Vali Hassan Pasha and the ex-Mudir-el-Maaref Hamid Bey, to give permits to any Mission schools, but on condition that education should be confined to Christian children, notwithstanding the Vizirial Order dated No. 30, of the 13th November, 1305 (25th November, 1889) instructing the Vilayet of Damascus, to grant permits for children of all religious sects, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have now succeeded in obtaining permits for all the village schools of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, signed by the Mudir-el-Maaref Hussein Awny Bey, and attested by the Governor-General Hassan Pasha, authorizing education for children of all religious sects—and have the honour to inclose herewith copy of a letter addressed to me by the Mission to this effect, expressing their satisfaction in the settlement of this question so many years pending.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NASIF MESHAKA.

Inclosure 2 in No. 377.

The Rev. Dr. J. Crawford to Acting Consul Meshâka.

Damascus, May 27, 1897.

Sir,

I BEG, on behalf of the Irish Presbyterian Mission at Damascus, to express to you our satisfaction at the success of your efforts to effect a settlement of the long pending question between the Mission and the Council of Public Instruction with regard to permits for our schools, and to thank you most heartily for having procured for us permits for all our village schools in a form entirely satisfactory to the Mission.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) JOHN CRAWFORD.

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* Not sent to Foreign Office.

No. 378.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 387.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 8, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Fontana, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, giving an account of the massacre of Armenians which took place at Eghin last autumn.

The information supplied by Mr. Fontana was, with two exceptions, obtained from respectable Moslems during his recent visit to Eghin, and it shows clearly that the massacre was entirely unprovoked by any act of the Armenians, and that it was deliberately organized by eight leading Mussulman officials of the place, with the assistance of the Acting Kaïmakam, Hakki Effendi.

This atrocious crime remains at the present day entirely unpunished. Notwithstanding the urgent and repeated appeals which I have made for many months past to the Turkish Government, I have received nothing but simply promises, and even these were only extorted by the fear of exposure in the House of Commons.

Since those promises were given I have tried my utmost to induce the Porte to order Hassan Feluni's Commission, or a part of it, to visit Eghin after the conclusion of the inquiry at Tokat.

The Foreign Minister has held out some hope that this will be done, and has assured me that he is supporting my request. I propose to have Mr. Fontana's despatch translated into Turkish, and to request the Foreign Minister to lay the translation before the Sultan, with an urgent personal appeal that he will read it.

The reports I have from time to time received with regard to Eghin have been communicated to my colleagues, with a request that they would make representations in favour of an inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 378.

Vice-Consul Fontana to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Kharput, May 19, 1897.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Excellency of the 7th instant, reporting that the responsibility for the terrible massacres at Eghin last autumn rested with the higher civil and military authorities there, and that consequently no serious inquiry into the matter could be conducted by these authorities, I now have the honour to submit the evidence furnished to me by eight or nine Eghin Turks (men, with one exception, of position in the town), which amply suffices, in my humble opinion, to establish the complete innocence of the Armenians and the awful guilt attaching to the officers and civil functionaries who deliberately planned and mercilessly brought to pass the destruction of a peaceful, inoffensive, and defenceless community which had contributed so largely for many years past to the general wealth and prosperity of the Turkish Empire.

At the time of the disturbances of 1895, the wealthier Armenians of Eghin, in the hope of purchasing the safety of the Christian townsfolk, collected and paid over ₤ T. 1,500 to certain local Aghas and Kizil Bash Chiefs of the Dersim who had threatened to attack the city. They then collected and consigned to the authorities whatever weapons were to be found in the houses of the Armenians residing there. Some months later a battalion of troops was dispatched to Eghin with the ostensible object of preventing aggression on the part of the neighbouring tribes. It was, nevertheless, hinted to a rich merchant, named Jamgochian, that if the Armenians still desired "Salamet," or salvation, they had better contribute another ₤ T. 500 towards it; but he replied that enough had been paid already, and that the troops would protect the Christians if they were attacked.

All remained seemingly quiet until the arrival of Eshki Zadé Hakki Effendi, who was appointed by the Vali to act pending the arrival of the present Kaïmakam, Rifuat

Effendi. The Mufti of Kharput reproved Raif Bey for the nomination of Hakki Effendi, saying that the latter was a native of Eghin, and therefore legally excluded from the post, which he was, moreover, entirely unfitted to fill.

Certain of the Eghin officials had for some time previous been meditating a disturbance with a view to enriching themselves at the expense of the Armenians, many of whose houses contained great wealth in the form of valuable carpets and jewellery. The names of the conspirators were:—

Hafiz Effendi, of the Administrative Council.
Cava Bey, Head of the Municipality.
Khalil Effendi, Juge d'Instruction, and his assistant, Ahmed Effendi.
Shukri Effendi, Chief Scribe of the Law Court.
The Hakim, Mustafa Fevzi.
Major Ibrahim Effendi (erroneously alluded to in the inclosure to my despatch No. 58 of the 18th November, 1896, as the "Colonel").
Captain Mustafa Aga.
The Imam of the troops.
The Zabita Memuru of the Gendarmes, Ahmed Effendi.

In Hakki Effendi these persons found an official after their own heart; he seems to have entered into their scheme with enthusiasm, and to have deployed every effort to amplify it. The clique of malefactors, thus presided over by the Acting Kaimakam, swore a solemn oath to wipe out the Christians, divide their property, and stand by each other through thick and thin should any questions be subsequently asked of them.

A few days before the massacre, Cava Bey, the Head of the Municipality, at whose order a number of axes were furnished to that Department, and were made use of to burst open the doors of Armenian houses, started off to Hidj, a large village situated some six hours from Eghin. He informed the local Aghas that Eghin would burn in a few days, and he said to the Armenians "Eghin vuraladjak" (will be smitten); but added that they need fear nothing for themselves. Twenty-four of them were murdered the day after the smiting of Eghin.

The Juge d'Instruction and his assistant visited the Mussulman Kurdish villages to the west of the town, and told the Aghas that there would shortly be a disturbance at Eghin, and that they should hold themselves in readiness to hasten thither as soon as the signal was given.

A message was sent to the Vali in secret about the same time by a well-disposed Turk, warning him that trouble was being hatched by the Eghin officials. The Vali, with unpardonable negligence, merely inquired of Hakki Effendi if this were really the case, taking no further steps to verify the truth of the message.

Upon the Friday preceding the massacre an Armenian woman, named Anna Eskijian, went to her husband's vineyard near the town to pass the day. She was in the habit of spending every Friday there. A friend of hers, the wife of Hafiz Effendi, the member of the Administrative Council above referred to, who had up to that date constantly reassured Anna, promising to tell her should any danger menace the Armenians, went as usual to a vineyard contiguous to that of the Eskijians. She called Anna, and said to her: "Anna, your Beylik has come. Eghin will be smitten next Tuesday. May my eyes be blinded if I speak not the truth. By God and the Prophet, Eghin will be stricken!" The woman then promised to leave the door of a stable belonging to her husband ajar on the morning of the day in question, so that Anna and her family might take refuge there.

Early on the following Tuesday troops of Kurds began to assemble on the heights above the town. A detachment of regulars, under the command of the fourth Yuz-bashi, were soon after stationed opposite to them. Other soldiers, accompanied by armed Mussulman civilians, began patrolling the town, and a public crier proclaimed to the Armenians that they need fear nothing, and might attend quietly to their business, as the Sultan had issued orders for their protection.

In order to offer a clearer idea to your Excellency of the nature of the ground as well as of the positions occupied by the Kurds and troops at the moment of the massacre, I venture herewith to inclose a sketch[1] of the town taken from my house-top. I could not find time to complete it, but trust that it may suffice for the purpose in view.

The tremendous cliffs on the left are impassable except at the point O, where a narrow and dangerous footpath winds up the rock. At the foot of the cliffs lie bare steep sandy slopes stretching down to the town. At the foot of the precipitous slope A, and hidden in the sketch by the trees, was situated the Armenian quarter called Keui-

[1] Not sent.

Bashi, which has now ceased to exist. The Kurds descended from the cliffs not included in but to the left of the sketch, and assembled in the vicinity of the quarter specified to the left of, and upon, the slope A. The troops were stationed to the right of that slope, and also above Keui-Bashi.

A telegram sent by the Porte to its Representatives abroad, and based no doubt upon the statement of Hakki Effendi, runs thus: "The Armenians of Eghin, owing to unfounded apprehension of disturbances, have burned and deserted their dwellings, and have gone to barricade themselves in the steep hills near the town."

The report sent to the Vali, and communicated to me by him, particularized "the Armenians" as those of the Keui-Bashi quarter.

It is to be presumed, therefore, that the said Armenians after cutting their way through soldiers and Kurds, barricaded themselves in bare sand and pitiless perpendicular rocks. No more transparent and clumsy a lie could be conceived of, I would submit, than that invented by Hakki Effendi and his colleagues in this particular instance.

The Mir-Alai or Colonel newly appointed to Eghin arrived there a few hours after the disturbance began. He was summoned to the telegraph office, and, although an old campaigner tried in many battles, reached it weeping. He remained there till evening, and on the following morning gave orders that the firing should cease. The massacre, however, continued in an acute stage the whole of that day (Wednesday), bayonet, dagger, club, and axe, supplanting the more noisy fire-arm. The Mir-Alai confessed to me that he had signed a Mazbata drawn up by the officials, and stating that the Armenians had taken the initiative by firing on the troops; but that he himself, nevertheless, had no personal knowledge or evidence of their having done so, and in fact he rather thought they had not.

The Armenian Murakhass, whose seal was attached to a telegram to the same effect, declared to me, in private, that he had gone with a crowd of men, women, and children, terrified at the arrival of the Kurds, to seek refuge behind the troops above Keui-Bashi before the massacre began. A few shots were fired over the heads of the Kurds by the soldiery without the slightest result. Three shots in rapid succession were then heard from the town, a bugle sounded, and Kurds and soldiers rushed down side by side in the direction from whence the shots proceeded. A few regulars were retained, however, by the Yuz-Bashi in command, who assured the Murakhass that he and the Armenians with him had nothing to fear. The Yuz-Bashi with his men then escorted the crowd down as far as his own house, where he sheltered the Murakhass; but he left the other Christians to the protection of the soldiers, who marched them down to a locality where they were set upon by their escort and the Moslem mob, and cut down to the last man.

The Murakhass further informs me that he was peremptorily ordered by officers to seal the telegram mentioned hereabove; that he knew this telegram contained nothing but lies, yet fearing death he tossed them his seal. The Murakhass is old and delicate, and deserves little censure for acting as he did.

The massacre was chiefly the work of the soldiery, the Mussulman townspeople lending a willing hand. The Kurds did very little butchery. No Dersim or Kizilbash Kurds entered the town. Nevertheless in the Keui-Bashi quarter alone 23 women, 102 boys, under 16 years of age, and 14 girls were slaughtered.

A Turk named Akan Zade Yashar, aided by his brother Ahmet, distributed over 100 cases of petroleum to the mob, shouting "Gaz bizden, yakmak sizden," which may be roughly translated as "Ours to give the fuel, yours to light the fire."

A retired Major, member of the Administrative Council, gave in his resignation through disgust at the massacre. Another Turk, who also resigned office, sent a telegram—copy of which I have myself seen—to the Sultan's First Secretary declaring that a few persons had brought about the massacre, and that if he were summoned to Constantinople he would divulge the names of the criminals. The receipt (also shown to me) for the telegram was dated the 16th Teshrin-i-Evel 1312, but it is believed that the latter was stopped by the local authorities.

No Moslems were wounded during the Eghin disturbance, though a few received deep scratches on their hands whilst disputing and clawing after the plunder. A few revolvers and two Berdans belonging to Armenians were afterwards found in their houses, no other weapons.

An Armenian store containing 300 carpets was cleared out by the mob. The greater part of the more valuable booty, consisting largely in jewellery and carpets, was appropriated by Hakki Effendi and his associates.

Mussulman merchants came to Eghin soon after the massacre from other parts, and bought up and carried off piles of carpets and rugs. The Hakim sold twenty-five

by auction at about the same time, and the Zabita Memouru, murderer of Nishan Effendi, clerk of the Régie at Eghin, sent twenty carpets as a present to his brother "Sari Mehmet," the notorious Tabour Aghassi at Mezreh.

The information contained in this despatch—with the exception of the Murakhuss' statement, and that of Anna Eskijian—was afforded me exclusively by Moslems, among whom were an officer of rank and a corporal of gendarmes. The Keui-Bashi quarter, the site of which I visited, was completely razed. It now presents the appearance of a stone quarry.

The town of Eghin, washed by the Euphrates, with its houses half concealed by hanging gardens, its colouring and surroundings on every side, is so exquisitely beautiful that it seems incredible that so fearful a tragedy can have been enacted upon so lovely a scene. The following instances may serve, however, to illustrate the sentiments now harboured by what is left of the Eghin Armenians towards a Turkish uniform. On my way to and whilst approaching Eghin the zaptieh riding in front of me turned the corner of a steep road leading up from the river to the centre of the town. A boy of about 12 suddenly catching sight of him screamed with terror and ran as if for his life. Later on we met with some poor Armenian women in rags carrying brushwood: they hurried to the side of the road, and crouched in the gutter, pressing their faces to the wall until we had passed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RAPHAEL A. FONTANA.

No. 379.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 390.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, respecting a tribal fight which has taken place at Mecca, and of which a repetition is expected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 379.

Consul Devey to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 38.)
Sir, *Jeddah, May 18, 1897.*

IN connection with telegrams recently addressed to your Excellency, I have the honour to report that a few days before the Medina caravan left Mecca, about the beginning of April, four camels had been stolen from the Hodeyi tribe (living between Mecca and Taif) by the Harb tribe. The Kaïmakam (agent) of the Grand Shereef being applied to by the sufferers for aid and justice, replied, and later repeated this reply in writing that he would not interfere, as such matters were always settled by the tribes themselves.

The Hodeyi, therefore, by way of inflicting revenge upon the Harb tribe, stopped the Medina caravan, of which most of the camels belonged to their foes, and the caravan went round by the sea road, as reported in my despatch No. 24 of the 7th ultimo.

A few days before the Haj (*i.e.*, about ten days ago) some of the Hodeyi further carried off sixteen camels of the Harb from the suburbs of Mecca, and three men were killed, and five or six wounded on either side in the combat which ensued.

The Kaïmakam of the Grand Shereef now wished to mediate, but the Hodeyi resented his intervention, saying that, as they had been denied help in the first, they would have none now that they are fighting themselves.

On the 13th instant, 400 Harbi and 900 Hodeyi were assembled at Muna, and wanted to fight; a war-drum was being beaten, when the Grand Shereef prevented a disturbance, promising to settle the difference after the Haj, and threatening very severe punishment if any breach of the peace occurred either at Muna or Mecca during it. So, for the moment,

the matter dropped, but it is expected by well-informed people at Mecca that neither party will forego fighting, and that the fight will be severe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

No. 380.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 392. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, inclosing a letter from the Armenian Vicar of Mush respecting the situation in his district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 380.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 11. Confidential.)
Sir, *Bitlis, May 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose, in original, for your Excellency's information, a confidential communication which was received by Mr. Monahan shortly before his departure from Vartan Vartabed, the Gregorian Vicar of Mush, and which was left to me to transmit. I do so with all reserve, as I have had no opportunity of verifying the statements which it contains. From what I hear locally, however, I am inclined to think that, with the exception of the remarks about self-constituted tax-gatherers, the account is in no way exaggerated. In many instances it lamentably confirms the impressions I derived from personal observations on my journey with regard to the nature of the evils to which the Armenian agricultural population in this district is continually exposed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 380.

The Armenian Vicar of Mush to Vice-Consul Monahan.

Sir, *Mush, March 27 (April 9), 1897.*

AS at the time of our visit to your Excellency I told you about the political state of Mush and its vicinity in behalf of the unfortunate Armenian people, what a dreadful condition they are in. At the same time I made a remark also in regard to the unutterable circumstances and indescribable condition and torments which they undergo and endure, and which are daily practised upon them by the tax-gatherers.

While from one side, the Kurd Aghas, the Kurd Beys, and other Islam individuals who try to uproot our Armenian people by every imaginable means, and continually they plunder, pillage, and kill them. At Manazgerd a notable Kurd in the name of Riza Ali, who is the Bimbashi of the Hamidiehs, commits so many evils of which we dread to make any allusion here, and not wishing to hurt your tender feelings, we do not like to mention particularly those evils which are done to the Armenians by Government officers and by his plans.

Upon all the miseries, however, as it is, it is exceedingly painful to see from the last autumn to the present day, what sorts of cruelties are going on in the vicinity of Mush by the hands of the tax-gatherers—so enormous, so unendurable, and so inhuman, that compared with these we forget all other sources of cruelties and injustice, so much so, that at last our Armenian people should be driven into the current of death.

And what is it? Nothing else but the method of the tax-collecting, which is nothing else but plunder, pillage, and killing, and all sorts of abominable vexations, which uproot the lives of Armenian population, and leads them to starvation.

There are, indeed, laws in every country for gathering the Government taxes which at the same time regulate the conduct of the officers. Certainly the taxes are collected in other countries according to stated regulations and rules. Restricting my words in its limits, I should only say that in this province there is no more dreadful and frightening thing than the method of taxation and tax-gatherings. The people are not so much afraid from Kurd Beys or from the robbers and plunderers as much as they do from the tax-collectors, because their office is not only to collect the Government taxes, but to ruin the Armenian houses and villages, by beating, starving, and killing him.

Is this hydra-headed monster that we are to understand as the said new reformation which was promised to be done, or should be done? If this is the long-expected and long-hoped for reforms, certainly it is worse than none. Because under the name of new reforms, or under a false pretension newly invented, every kind of cruelties and barbarism are going on. They kill the people now not directly but indirectly, doing them such massacres as they judge best for them to do. We beg of your Excellency not to feel tired when we mention below events which are the fruits of such tax-gathering.

The collection of taxes as is going on here, at present, is not an especial office of any one. What is it then? Whoever by the first opportunity presents himself to the Government, who has any demand or pecuniary claim upon the treasure, to him is granted the office of tax-gathering, whether he be a military of a common individual. Enough that he should be an Islam. They are immediately sent over to the villages and often to Armenian villages; on every turn there may be found five or ten tax-collectors in one village, and each one of these go in to the Armenians as a wolf would go into the lambs. They begin to beat, to whip, and to plunder them, put them in prison, take from them what they have, and whatever they can get, and of these they take a part for themselves as bribes, and the other part for the Government tax.

It will take long, Sir, to write here minutely upon these points, but be assured that those who are called tax-gatherers are to be found from ten to twenty in number in one village.

Again, add to this number of persons another sum or lot of tax-gatherers in the same village, and all these in a poor and really indigent village, who are naked, hungry, starved, and in debt. They live with their servants and with their horses for days and weeks, consuming all the litter there is in his house, without any payment; even they snatch the bread from the children's hands; exact from them as much money as they can. Is this reformation?

When the Armenian villagers hears the tax-collectors are coming they begin to faint to death. They seek to die, but can't find it. In a barbarous and howling noise they enter into the villages, and then the poor villagers must run to meet them as slaves. They are to serve them as their lords, and lead them to such houses as they choose to live in, and each one takes for himself and for his servants one or two of the villagers to serve them, to wait upon them. If they do not prepare their food at their arrival, woe to the Armenians. Whips, sticks, are ready for them. Like highway robbers they go through the village by day or by night, break in doors, crush the earthen dishes, and regardless to the sex, be it woman or man, strike him, beat him cruelly, and annoy them by every means, hurt them, frighten them and their children. Yes, they beat them even when the tax-money is made ready. Why? because they want to be bribed also.

These torments are diverse and innumerable. For instance, they cut of the hair of women, pull and pick out the moustaches of the husbands. They fill up their mouths with the discharges of the bowels of men and animals; undress them, and while naked, they pour upon them cold water in the winter time, and then whip them on their naked bodies, bind them to the post with ropes, keep them hungry for days, spit into their faces and their mouths. They urge the Armenians to deny their faith and holy religion and sacraments. In the village Ardert (in the vicinity of Mush) the tax-gatherers put a live cat in the trousers of the Armenians. In the vicinity of Koolp, the skirts of five women they undressed and sold them, and in the villages of Arbkhonk and Khilzari, they took the mere bread of the utmost indigent persons by means of gendarmes; and so in Arbkhonk four, and in Khilzari five, Armenians died by starvation. And to these inhuman cruelties and immoralities, are partakers all the other villages too, and the people are so far gone in poverty and indigency, that in Mush, and in its vicinity, there is only 5 in 100 who have mere bread to live on or a pair of oxen to plough his field. They are destituted from their gains. No business whatever. Their implements, their cows, their oxen, their flocks of sheep, are gone, so that they are already near, very near, to starvation. It seems the Government is not yet satisfied to see these miseries in the land, so that there is an especial effort to bring into the current of starvation even those

few Armenians who are yet somewhat better than the beggars—working with all their might to squeeze out of them the little they have got in their hands.

The tax-collectors, regardless that a portion of the Armenians have paid their taxes, take from them by force their cattle, and sell them to the butchers with a quarter of their value, and thus they deprive them of the means of their livelihood contrary to the laws of justice and by force; contrary to the laws, then demand the taxes of those who are unable to pay from the few who have paid their tax. And how is it possible that five houses in a village can pay the taxes of ninety houses that are equal to nothing?

These which we have mentioned here are not imaginations, but they are facts seen and felt in this country. God only knows that they are facts, and those which I write here come very short from its true standard.

Once for all, my dear Sir, we made it long enough to make you to understand much from our little narrative.

It is our humble request to your Excellency that while you intend to return to London, please do not forget our petition, and our poor and helpless people for God's sake. Do pray, pity, and have mercy upon people who suffer greatly. Be kind not to spare any means in your power to do for an oppressed people, either to help for a fundamental, real, and radical reform, or else to find some way of permission for these people for emigration to other parts of the world where they can be happy and work without molestation of their rights. If not, be assured that, in their present oppression, it cannot last more than two years, and the whole Armenian population will come to their end.

I am, &c.
(Signed) VARTAN VARTABED.

No. 381.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 393.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 12, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, forwarding the thanks of the Armenian Vicar of Mush for the relief afforded to his district, where further help is required.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 381.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Bitlis, May 19, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, inclosed to your Excellency, copy of a letter from Vartan Vartabed, the Gregorian Vicar of Mush, conveying the thanks of the Armenian community for the sums received for the purposes of relief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

P.S.—Further relief is demanded; but before granting it, I propose to visit Guenj and see what has already been done. I have telegraphed to your Excellency on the subject to-day.

F. E. C.

Inclosure 2 in No. 381.

The Armenian Vicar of Mush to Vice-Consul Monahan.

Mush, March 28 (*April* 9), 1897.

Dear Sir,

IN behalf of the Armenian starved population of Sasun, Guenj, Koolp, Khizan, Chahakchour, and of Mush, we apply to your Excellency to declare our deepest gratitude and thankfulness to the gracious Government of Great Britain and to your Excellency, that, in the name and honour of Christianity and humanity, you have been pleased and kind to save the lives of thousands of starved people, who have been great sufferers of misery and damages during the last three years by awful accidents. For this we cannot possibly do anything except pray that God Almighty may be pleased to bless and keep the Throne of Great Britain and her kind and gracious people.

Is it possible to forget your Excellency's favour when you have been kind enough and pleased during this winter to make application to your Embassy, and through your kind mediation we received the sum of 1,000*l.* in gold for the starved people of Sasun, Guenj, Koolp, and Khizan Provinces, as also the sum of 250*l.* in gold for Patvarik, which sum we have already distributed among those for whom it was sent.

Sir, during this last winter the lives of those poor people have been spared by your Excellency's favour. But when we think of the future, we dread to take into consideration the thought of how those who are in extreme need will live in the present and the future. We therefore beg of you to be once more kind and philanthropic to apply to the Christian hearts for mercy and help for our people in this province, both for bread, for cattle, and for seed for those who have nothing of the sort to work with during this spring, in order that they may get their bread in the future.

This is the only possible way to save their lives from starvation, and help them to begin work.

We hope you will never spare your efforts, as far as lies in your power, to help those sufferers, and their prayers will reward your efforts, because it is for humanity and for God's sake.

I remain, &c.
(Signed) VARTAN VARTABED.

No. 382.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 394. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 12, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 356 of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, stating that the eulogies passed on Hussein Pasha by the villagers of the Van district are undeserved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 382.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 23. Confidential.)

Sir,

Erzeroum, May 28, 1897.

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 25th May, I have the honour to report that some time ago my French colleague was informed by his Consular Agent at Van that Hussein Pasha, the Haidaranli Chief, who is still at Erzinghian, was causing a Petition in favour of his return to be got up in his own district, which the Armenian villagers were obliged to sign.

Yesterday I was informed, in confidence by Shemseddin Bey, the ex-Vali of Van, who has arrived at Erzeroum on his way to Constantinople, that a Petition in the above sense was presented to him, but that he had paid no attention to it, as he knew that it had been signed by the Armenians under pressure. His Excellency added that there was

no great credit due to Sultan Bey, Hussein's brother, for his protective attitude towards the Armenians, as he had himself informed him that he would hold him personally responsible for their safety.

I am authorized by my French and Russian colleagues to state that they agree with me in regarding the representations in favour of Hussein Pasha, reported by the Russian Vice-Consul at Van, as valueless and misleading, and they are still of opinion that Hussein's return to his district would be calamitous.

Finally, I have the highest authority for saying that all the respectable and law-abiding Mussulmans of these provinces regard Hussein Pasha, of Patnitz, as the greatest scourge of the country, and as being entirely undeserving of any indulgent treatment whatsoever.

I had the honour to report the substance of the above to your Excellency by telegraph to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No 383.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 396. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 12, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, relating the circumstances of Shemseddin Bey's resignation of the office of Vali of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 383.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 24. Confidential.)

Sir,

Erzeroum, May 28, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report the following circumstances attending the resignation of Shemseddin Bey, the Vali of Van, who arrived here on the 26th instant, on his way to Constantinople.

After the recent disturbances at Tokat, Shemseddin Bey received a telegram from the Porte, informing him that the Mutessarif of that place, together with the Military Commandant and the Chief of Police, had been arrested and would be put on their trial. This he took as a warning that the same fate awaited him if similar disorders took place at Van, and he accordingly replied that, unless he were furnished with the means of maintaining order, it would be impossible for him to accept the responsibility of disturbances which he was left powerless to avert, and that he preferred to resign his post. He hoped that the result might be that the Central Government would see fit to change its policy of neglecting Van, and that he would receive such support as would enable him to carry on the Government of the province with some chance of success.

Instead of this, after a considerable interval, he received a further telegram from the Porte curtly informing that his resignation was accepted, and making no reference to the other points which he had raised.

Shemseddin Bey tells me that, in default of the necessary support and encouragement, he was glad to leave an almost untenable position, although he would have been willing to remain at his post, if such support had been afforded him. He had endeavoured to do his duty, and in quitting Van he could say that he had left the vilayet the better for the policy of conciliation which he had consistently followed during his few months' Governorship. It was, however, useless to disguise the fact that there was still imminent danger of fresh trouble in Van.

In logical order, the chief causes of this danger were, in the first place, the want of funds, and consequent breakdown of the administrative machine; secondly, the lawless conduct of the Kurdish tribes; and thirdly, the Armenian revolutionary agitation, which continued to threaten the province from without.

It would require three years of tranquillity and good government before the financial resources of Van could suffice for the requirements of the vilayet. In the meanwhile it was indispensable that a minimum of £ T. 2,000 monthly should be provided from outside, and with this backing a capable Governor could reorganize the administration, especially the gendarmerie, restore and maintain order, and hold the Kurdish tribes in check.

The chief grievances of the Armenian population would then be redressed, and the ground being thus cut from under the feet of the Armenian agitators, the revolutionary movement would speedily collapse. He was far from regarding the Kurdish difficulty as an insuperable one if properly handled, and that race was much less courageous and intractible than others which have been successfully reduced to obedience. But the chief essential to success must be the continuity of a firm and even-handed policy during a term of years, and it was to the absence of this continuity above all other administrative errors, to which he attributed the present deplorable condition of what was destined by nature to be a prosperous and productive province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 384.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 297. Confidential.)
Constantinople, June 12, 1897.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, forwarding a Memorandum containing observations on his recent journey through Kurdistan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 384.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 12. Confidential.)
Bitlis, May 19, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, inclosed for your Excellency's information, a Memorandum containing a few observations on the condition of the country through which I travelled during my recent journey through Kurdistan to Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 384.

Observations by Vice-Consul Crow on a Journey through Kurdistan-Erzeroum to Bitlis, May 1897.

(Confidential.)

I TRAVELLED by way of Erteb, Mejidli, the Korsu district, Khyngs, Gumgum, Sikhavi, and Mush to Bitlis, leaving Erzeroum on the 5th, and reaching Bitlis on the 12th May. I was accompanied as far as Khyngs by M. Boghos Karahadian, the Armenian relief agent, on his way to distribute seed among the outlying villages in the Khyngs district, where the distress is very great.

Kurds.

In the mountainous region lying between the Passin plain and Khyngs, inhabited by the Kurds, I found the villagers in a state of eager excitement at the orders which had just been received for the dispatch to Constantinople of eleven Hamidieh regiments. The martial spirit was very strong throughout the district. I was eagerly questioned as to the ultimate destination of the regiments, and the

troopers entertained great hopes that they would take part in the military operations on the Greek frontier. Apparently, a large proportion of the levy is going from this district, as whole villages, such as Mejidli, Eyublas, Ameninkomi, Dervishkomi, and others on this route were making their preparations for departure. At Gumgum, the centre of two Hamidieh regiments there are stationed a Colonel, six Captains, and other officers, but no attempt is made to drill or instruct the men. They picket their horses in the fields and live on the villagers, passing their time in pilfering and marauding in the surrounding neighbourhood.

The Turks themselves complain that since the enrolling of the Hamidieh cavalry the Kurds have become intolerable. In former times the zaptiehs exercised a certain amount of authority in the district, and were feared, but latterly any remonstrances on their part are treated with contempt, the Kurds resenting all interference on the ground that both zaptieh and Kurd are now soldiers of His Imperial Majesty, and hence brothers. The consequences are obvious. The gendarmerie, unable to control or check the Kurds in any way, find their best policy is to work hand and hand with them, with the result that the relations between zaptieh and Kurd are excellent, but the depredations on the unarmed Christian population of the Sultan unhindered.

At Hasskeui, on the Mush plain, a Kurdish Elder, who had come down from the mountains to go bail for his brother, who had committed some offence and fled, informed me that murder was of daily occurrence among the Kurds. They killed one another like cats. The Government paid no attention, and did not dare to approach them. Most of the Kurdish villages in the hills bordering the Mush plain paid no taxes at all. The only way to quell a Kurd was to kill him.

On my asking the Vali of Bitlis if any steps had been taken to punish the Kurds in Modihan who had lately assassinated a Kaimakam and two zaptiehs, his Excellency replied that no regular troops had been dispatched, but that the "Alai Bey" (the Head of the Gendarmerie), "who was a very brave man," had been sent with a few more zaptiehs to inquire into the occurrence.

With reference to the continued depredations in the Akhlat district, his Excellency remarked that the Kurds were dangerous people to handle, and tacitly admitted that the means at his command were insufficient to enable him to exercise any control over them.

Hussein Pasha, I am informed, the Chief of the Hyder Ali Kurds, arrived at Erzinghian from Constaustinople on his way to Alashgherd three weeks ago, decorated and in high favour. A renewal of the disorders in Akhlat has been the result, and two villages have been plundered already. I understand the character of this desperado is well known to Her Majesty's Embassy, and needs no comment. His presence in this neighbourhood is likely to cause serious trouble.

Armenians.

I saw much of the Armenians at Erteb, Khyngs, Sikhavi, and in the villages scattered over the Mush plain.

The Armenians of Erteb were plundered last year by the Kurds, who carried off all they could lay their hands on, and killed one or two of the inhabitants. There are a few Moslem families living there who afforded protection to some of the women. The Moslem houses were untouched by the Kurds. The rest of the village fled out into the plain. The gendarme station is only 4 miles distant, in sight, on the other side of it at Hassancalen. The zaptiehs were called out, the Kurds retreated with their booty to their mountain fastnesses, and the Armenians were duly reinstated in their empty village. As far as I can judge, this seems to be the usual mode of procedure consequent on all Kurdish marauding expeditions. Erteb seemed on the whole fairly prosperous under the circumstances. I heard no immediate complaints, though the presence of the zaptiehs who accompanied me would necessarily preclude any attempt on the part of the villagers to ventilate their grievances. Armenians are unwilling to speak in their presence, as any disclosure of the abuses which the zaptiehs practise with perfect impunity would entail redoubled persecution afterwards. As it is difficult for them to speak of their grievances without disclosing these abuses, they prudently hold their tongues, and information as to their true condition is only to be elicited with the greatest difficulty.

At Khyngs, a town of some 500 houses, there is stationed a "bolok" of cavalry now, consisting of sixty men.

The Kaimakam, Ismail Bey, had just been recalled, owing to complaints of

extortion made against him by the inhabitants. I met him on his way to Erzeroum. A Major has been sent from there to take his place temporarily.

I was entertained at the house of Parsegh Effendi, a rich Armenian merchant, who owns considerable property in the neighbourhood, and who was absent in the outlying villages distributing seed. His son-in-law, I was informed, was executed at Bitlis after the disturbances of 1895. Parsegh's brother came to see me in the evening, with several other Armenians connected with this family.

They spoke freely of the condition of Armenia, expressing themselves as absolutely discouraged at the turn events were taking, and the absence of reform. They had hoped for some improvement after the sacrifices they had undergone in the massacres, but had found none. At Khyngs they said the religious animosity of the Turks was very pronounced, Turkish soldiers and others openly saying that they would wipe out the name of Christendom at the first opportunity. Petty persecution was general; and whereas before the massacres Turks in purchasing goods from Armenian traders would pay the prices asked, they now did not scruple to take whatever they pleased at their own valuation, and accompanied the spoliation with threats of violence if resisted. They instanced the emancipation of Bulgaria, but said they did not want autonomy, but merely reform and security. Finally, they asked if the Christian Powers of Europe would continue to allow the Turks to massacre a nation wholesale, and would wait till the whole Armenian population was exterminated before insisting on the execution of the long-promised reforms.

I endeavoured to calm them and gave them such advice as I could. I said the execution of the reforms, though unavoidably delayed by circumstances, was still under consideration and would not be lost sight of. I recommended them to remain absolutely quiet and give no attention or encouragement to the emissaries of Committees or revolutionary agents who were still hovering round their towns, and whose propositions were dictated by self-interested motives. Any agitation on the part of Armenians could only benefit Russia which would gladly see Turkey weakened by a repetition of the events of 1895. England was sorry for them, but, under the circumstances, she could not interfere more than she had done in the internal affairs of the country and could not go to war on their account. Emigration was open to them, but as long as they elected to remain on their native soil they should patiently refrain from all agitation and await the reforms which time could not fail to bring about. Their scattered position over the whole of Anatolia precluded the possibility of an emancipation for which Bulgaria was geographically fitted and Russia would never allow an independent Armenia.

They promised to have nothing to do with revolutionary agents, but expressed the fear that unless events travelled more quickly than they had done in the past, there would be little left of the Armenian population to benefit by the execution of the reforms promised by Europe.

The Turkish method of pacifying Armenian agitation for reform was aptly described to me at Khyngs as being similar to that employed by Hamidieh officers, in order to allay panic among Kurdish troops terrified at the sight of water, when embarking on board ship for the first time: "They drop a few into the sea to quiet the rest." Similar treatment, so the Armenians told me, is accorded by Turkey to Armenia.

I stayed a night at Sikhavi, an Armenian village of twenty-five houses on the borders of the Euphrates, four and a-half hours distant from Mush. I was greeted at first with vague expressions of discontent at Kurdish raids, over taxation, and the callous indifference of the Government as regards their complaints. They asked me if I brought them good news. A priest of the neighbourhood came to see me, and said his church, within a stone's throw of the village, had been sacked by the Kurds last year, and his ten buffaloes, which he valued at £T. 100, killed and eaten.

He himself had escaped to the village. His repeated representations to the Mush authorities for redress had been without effect. He had been told that Armenians must expect that sort of treatment, because they agitated and gave trouble.

The priest was succeeded by an ex-porter from Constantinople, who had been in the capital nine years till expelled after the massacres.

He said the Circassians and Lazzi settlers in the villages of Charbor, Ainn, and Zring were as bad as the Kurds. They continually levied blackmail, and if resisted denounced the Armenians as revolutionists with the result that the latter were immediately arrested as "suspects." While at Constantinople he could support

his family by his earnings, he said, and pay his taxes, but since his return he could not make ends meet. Most of the village cattle had been carried off by the Kurds, and the quantity left was insufficient to enable the whole village to plough. Those who had no buffaloes or oxen turned the ground with such wooden implements as they could manufacture. Heavy taxation, extortionate demands of the zaptiehs, and Kurdish depredation deprived them of any profits resulting from the harvest.

The taxation of this village was given me by the zaptieh who collected it. I may therefore conclude it is correct, and if any thing under-stated. There are twenty-five houses and about forty able-bodied men left, and the total sum collected yearly by the Government is £T. 500. This includes the military exemption tax which, in spite of orders from Constantinople for its remission for two years, seems to be levied as usual.

The Headman of the village took advantage of the absence of the zaptieh to inform me that they suffered more persecution at the hands of the Government in the person of troops, zaptiehs, and tax-collectors than from the Kurds. Zaptiehs, he said, were worse than Kurds and more to be dreaded. Their village was a prey to everybody, and soldiers were constantly billeted on them without payment. Their women were violated by the Kurds. Kurds and regular troops combined to rob them, with the distinction that the latter forced the villagers to seal documents to the effect that they had paid for all they had taken. The villagers from terror at the consequences of refusal were obliged, he said, to do this. He complained of the extortionate method of collecting taxes. About 100 men had emigrated from the village, leaving their wives and children. The taxation had not been reduced and the full amount was levied from those who remained. The tax-collectors turned the wives and children of the emigrants out of their houses, pulled them down and sold the beams and wood to pay the taxes. He showed me the houses which had been pulled down.

Finally, he implored me not to mention the name of his village to the local authorities at Bitlis as having complained, as, if it were known, they would pay bitterly for it. He begged me to inform my Embassy of what I had seen and heard.

There are some 200 Armenian villages between Gumgum and Mush. The district is fertile and well watered, and, under normal conditions, should be an exceedingly prosperous region.

At Saluh I was accosted by an Armenian who had been badly beaten by the Mush authorities, but who refused to disclose the reason in the presence of the zaptieh. At Simlach, a village of forty houses situated in the richest part of the Mush plain, the Kurds made daily requisitions for corn, barley, shoes, clothing, &c. The inhabitants who desire to emigrate are prevented by the authorities from leaving. The Vali, on the other hand, assures me that all Armenians who have paid their taxes are permitted to leave, if they desire to do so. As the Dragoman of this Vice-Consulate, Agop Effendi, has up to the present moment been unable to obtain his passport, in spite of the Grand Vizier's telegram to the Vali to give him one, as communicated in Mr. Herbert's telegram to Mr. Hampson of the 12th August, 1896, and as Agop Effendi has proved himself out of debt to Government, as far as taxes are concerned, I am inclined to think that the complaints of the village of Simlach against local obstruction are well grounded.

Gendarmerie.

The gendarmerie or zaptieh force consists at present of batches of four to eight mounted men, for the most part badly clothed and equipped but fairly mounted, stationed as cordons from 12 to 15 miles apart along the post road.

In addition to the duty of escorting the post they are charged by the local Government with the task of collecting taxes from the villages, of preventing contraband, of bringing offenders to justice, with the maintenance of general order, and with any other general or special Government service for the execution of which a man and horse may be required. The zaptieh's duties are therefore many and diverse, and it is unusual to find more than one or two men at most at the guard stations. The accounts of their pay varied along the road. Some had not been paid for fifteen and others for eleven months, while the more favoured had arrears due to them for periods varying from four to eight months. The pay of a zaptieh is £T. 2 per mensem. He provides and keeps his own horse; two and a-half month's wages in the year are paid in cash and the remainder in kind. The latter

portion he receives in barley, corn, grass, &c., and obtains "havalehs" for the amount. On presentation of these he is given grain, which is supposed to represent the equivalent of so many months pay, but the price set upon it by the local Treasury being double that of its marketable value, the zaptieh receives half the amount only to which he is entitled by regulation.

Under the circumstances it is difficult to see how a zaptieh can live and keep his horse. As a matter of fact he billets himself and his animal on the villages to which he is sent on official business, and takes advantage of his commission as tax-collector to set aside for himself at the expense of the village such sums as he considers necessary for his immediate requirements. I saw no non-Mussulman zaptiehs till I reached Mush, where I understand there are a considerable number. The spirit of discontent and insubordination among the Mussulman members of the force was very strong. I heard many complaints of the absence of promotion, the favours showered on the Hamidieh troopers, the unchecked insolence of the Kurds, the laxity of the authorities, and, above all, the irregular manner in which they received their salaries.

Military Exemption Tax.

I hear at Bitlis that attempts are being made to levy the military exemption tax as usual. This is not countenanced by the local authorities, who take measures to prevent it when it is brought to their notice. One of the principal charges formulated by the Vali against Haji Lejneddin of this town, and for which he was arrested, was that he disobeyed superior orders on this point, and not only levied the tax but put the proceeds into his own pocket. Under the present system, by which zaptiehs are sent to collect taxes, it is difficult to prevent abuses of this kind, and I fear that many villages are made to pay the tax in spite of the remission order.

Troops.

The regular troops at present quartered in this vilayet are as follows:—

Infantry.—1st and 3rd battalions of the 32nd Regiment at Bitlis; 2nd battalion of the 32nd Regiment at Hazou; 4th battalion of the 32nd Regiment at Mush.

Besides this two battalions reached Mush from Van on the 11th May, but I do not know their regiment.

1st, 2nd, and 3rd battalions of the 31st Regiment at Sairt, and the 4th battalion in the neighbourhood.

Cavalry.—The head-quarters of the 23rd Regiment are at Mush. One boluk is stationed in Boulangh and one boluk at Khyngs.

Conclusions.

My observations on the above journey lead me to submit the following suggestions for the better administration of that portion of the country through which I have travelled:—

1. The removal of the present military commander at Erzinghian, who for personal reasons, is too much inclined to condone the excesses committed by the Hamidieh troopers, and gives too partial protection to the Kurds generally. He should be replaced by some official having both the will and the power to deal severely with the Kurds.

2. The issue of instructions to the Erzinghian military authorities to co-operate, when required, with the provincial Governors for the repression of Kurdish disorder.

3. The formation of an efficient and properly paid gendarmerie to be at the disposal of the local Governors for the maintenance of general order. The nucleus is already at hand.

4. The levying of taxes by responsible individuals in the place of unpaid zaptiehs.

(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

Bitlis, May 19, 1897.

No. 385.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 401.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 16, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the progress of relief work in that district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 385.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Van, May* 31, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that I returned from Persia on the 27th May.

On my arrival at Khoi on the 15th I met Mr. Allen. He had not bought any more cattle as the Persian Government was raising difficulties about exporting them. This, as it turned out, was fortunate. The season was already too late for the cattle to arrive in time to be of any good for the spring sowing, and in view of possible contingencies it was advisable to keep money in hand. Further, on my return to Van, I found that the cattle assembled in Ardjek which were to have been distributed in my absence were still there. The Government, fearing cattle plague, had sent the veterinary surgeon of the artillery in Van to examine them. He reported a large number sick, and of course they had to be placed under observation. Unfortunately I did not pass through Ardjek on my return, but from what I hear there is nothing serious among them, the probability being that they are suffering from being worked too soon after their trying journey from Persia. I believe the authorities here have no wish to hinder the relief work. They were alarmed at the action taken by the Quarantine doctor, who wrote and threw on them the responsibility of spreading cattle plague, should it be introduced into Turkey. His action in the matter has been the reverse of helpful. The loss of the services of these cattle during the past few weeks is very serious.

I am, however, not inclined to take the dismal view of the future that I would have done had I remained in Van, and been guided by what I hear here. I cannot help thinking there is food enough in most places to carry the people through the winter, if not to next year's harvest. It is, however, most important that there should be a large sowing in the autumn. The autumn-sown crop is better and earlier than that sown in spring. It is to secure this that our efforts during the next few months must be directed. We consider it advisable at present to wait and see if the action expected to be taken shortly by the Armenian revolutionists will be successful in causing fresh disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 386.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 402.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 16, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 370 of the 1st June I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis, giving details of the affray between the Kurds and the Turkish gendarmes at Modeki.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 386.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 14.)

Sir, *Bitlis, May 25, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegrams Nos. 43 and 44 of the 23rd and 24th instant, with reference to the fate of the gendarmes sent to Modeki to inquire into the circumstances attending the murder of the Kaïmakam of that caza on the 12th ultimo and to collect the sheep and other taxes in arrears.

The troops, consisting of a Colonel, one company of infantry, and a mountain gun, which left Bitlis on the 22nd instant, proceeded as far as Alizouh, an Armenian village on the outskirts of Modeki, some three hours from Bitlis. Here they found several wounded gendarmes who had escaped from Modeki, and who related that their force had been surrounded by the Kurds, and the Alay Bey (the Head of the gendarmes), one Captain, three Lieutenants (one of whom military), and three sergeants killed and cut to pieces. Fighting was going on between the Kurds and the troops already in Modeki. The Colonel, considering his force insufficient to advance, remained the night in the village, and returned on Sunday morning to Bitlis with the wounded gendarmes in order to await reinforcements.

The local Treasurer, a Turk, who escaped from Modeki gives the following account of what took place.

The Alay Bey and some twenty-five zaptiehs proceeded to the Kaïmakamlik, and demanded the murderers of the Kaïmakam. The villagers replied that they could not find them.

The Alay Bey then gave orders for the immediate collection of the taxes. Certain Kurd Aghas endeavoured to persuade him to act with caution, saying that their people were wild, and, if severe measures were adopted for the payment of the taxes, they could not answer for the consequences. The Alay Bey refused to listen to their advice, and sent zaptiehs to Kolantz, a neighbouring village, to collect money. The Kurds of this village fled, and on hearing this the Alay Bey proceeded thither himself. The Aghas of Kolantz begged him to go away, and offered to collect the money and send it to head-quarters themselves, whereupon they were arrested and beaten. The news of this spread to the neighbouring villages, and the Kurds returned in large numbers with arms. The Alay Bey gave orders to fire, and fighting began. The zaptiehs were surrounded, and took refuge in a mosque, the officers retiring to a house near. The house was set on fire, and they were driven out and killed. The Kurds took the arms of the zaptiehs in the mosque, and then let them go. It is said they first demanded the surrender of the officers, and offered to let the zaptiehs go unharmed, saying they were Kurds and their brothers, and that they only wanted the Osmanlis, who had finished the Armenians, and were now coming to make an end of them. It seems uncertain whether the officers surrendered or died fighting, but, in any case, it is clear that five officers and three sergeants were killed, and several zaptiehs wounded. The bodies of the dead were horribly mutilated by the Kurds.

I am informed that the inhabitants of the Modeki district have been prepared for emergencies since the murder of the Kaïmakam, and have sent away their families to Hazon, Narzan, and other places. It is said they are inviting the Armenian revolutionaries, of whom there are many about, to join them and make common cause against the Government.

The Vali is of opinion that the revolutionary feeling in Modeki is being fanned by the leading Kurds resident in Bitlis, who wish to hamper him and raise difficulties. It appears that enforced taxation is at the root of their grievances, arrears having been demanded for three years.

The Vali's orders to the Alay Bey were to secure the persons of the Aghas before trying to collect money, and, when he had put them under arrest, to dictate his own terms, and apply, if necessary, to Bitlis for more assistance. These orders were not followed.

It seems that no troops were sent from Siirt, as reported in my telegram No. 43, but only a small contingent from Mush, who have since been routed by the Kurds, and their arms captured.

I hear that disturbances have also taken place in Boulanik, where 400 soldiers are reported to have been sent to collect Hamidieh cavalry. The Kurds did not respond to the call, but fled to the hills, and began to plunder the villages. It is rumoured here that the Hamidieh cavalry are required for service on the Russian frontier.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

No. 387.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 403.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, June 10, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting the difficulties placed by the local authorities in the way of the emigration of Armenians.

I instructed Mr. Block to speak to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject. But his Excellency declared that indigent Armenians could not be allowed to emigrate, as they only returned to the country later on still more discontented and indigent than when they left. As to the question of allowing Armenians to leave their own vilayet for some other part of the Empire, his Excellency stated that in many cases Armenians had availed themselves of such permission to fly the country, and that the Porte had consequently been obliged to impose the strictest conditions, as reported by Mr. Waugh.

He however expressed the hope that the country would slowly settle down, and that the Armenians would then be able to find work and pursue their usual avocations. I have informed Mr. Waugh of the substance of Tewfik Pasha's observations.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 387.

Vice-Consul Waugh to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Diarbekir, May 18, 1897.*

THE Deputy Bishop of the Armenian Gregorians here has asked me to represent to your Excellency the difficulties made by the authorities in granting teskereh to the Armenians wishing to leave this vilayet.

The stagnation of trade and the lack of work, resulting from the general depression and despair of any improvement, is inducing emigration on a large scale. The richer merchants are leaving in parties of 30, 50, and 100, week by week, for Cyprus, Egypt, and elsewhere. Many of the artisan class would gladly go, but cannot procure teskereh.

A largely signed Petition was presented to me yesterday, asking for help in procuring passports for abroad. I returned the Petition, and advised the petitioners, who are artisans, to apply to the Vali for passports, which they seemed afraid to do.

I must explain that hitherto no one has ventured to ask for a passport to leave the country. The accepted ruse is to take out a teskereh for Jerusalem, and, once on board a foreign steamer, to land at Alexandria or in Cyprus.

Teskereh were formerly obtained with comparative ease; but stringent Regulations have lately been enforced here by the local authorities.

An application for a teskereh has now to be accompanied by a written guaranty for payment of taxes in case the applicant remains away. The guarantor is required to be a proprietor of land or house property to the value of £ T. 50, and his signature has to be legalized with a fee of 60 piastres.

This formality applies to all who leave the vilayet, whether for abroad (viâ Jerusalem) or for the neighbouring vilayets, and is practically prohibitive on all but the well-to-do.

The prevailing emigration of the leading merchants and employers of labour is a bad thing for the country. If something could be done to create a sense of security in the population, it would be the best remedy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. T. WAUGH.

No. 388.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 23.)

(No. 404.)
Therapia, June 16, 1897.

My Lord,

IN the despatch, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, Captain Elliot, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, gives an account of a recent journey across the Persian frontier which it appeared to him desirable to undertake with a view to verifying the current rumours of an intended raid by Armenian revolutionists upon the Kurdish tribes of the frontier.

Captain Elliot ascertained that considerable numbers of these revolutionists had quartered themselves upon the peaceful Armenian villages of the plain of Selmas, in the neighbourhood of Khoi, and that a raid upon the Kurds was actually planned for the first week in this month. Some 1,500 men were to take part in the incursion which Captain Elliot has done his best to avert, by pointing out to the revolutionists that the inevitable result of such a raid must be to provoke fresh disorders and massacres, and by warning the authorities of Van and the Persian Government, through Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, against the trouble which is brewing. The Kurds would inevitably retaliate upon the Armenian villagers, who could only escape massacre by abandoning their homes and taking refuge in Van.

Arms, it appears, are easily obtainable beyond the Russian frontier, and the encouragement thus given to the revolutionists tends to support the theory that these disorders are purposely promoted by persons desiring to provide a pretext for a Russian advance into the adjoining Turkish and Persian provinces.

Under these circumstances I consider that Captain Elliot was justified in pursuing his journey beyond the limits of his district, and, with your Lordship's concurrence, I propose to approve the energetic steps which he has taken to prevent a renewal of disorders.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) M. DE BUNSEN.

Inclosure in No. 388.

Captain Elliot to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 23.)
Van, June 1, 1897.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit the following information as to the doings and intentions of the Armenian revolutionists, which I obtained on my recent visit to Persia.

I arrived at Khoi on the 15th and Selmas on the 16th May. In both these places I heard that the revolutionists, who had quitted Persia a few weeks before, were returning to Selmas. This name is applied not to a single town only, but to a fertile plain which is thickly dotted over with large and seemingly prosperous villages.

Many of the revolutionists are Russian subjects. Most of them were coming from Russia, a few from Tabreez. They appear to be well armed, and to have no difficulty in getting cases of rifles and ammunition from Russia, which they pass through the custom-houses as iron goods, or under some similar declaration. The rifles are mostly magazine arms of, I believe, the Russian military pattern.

Armed parties are sent to the frontier to escort these consignments. On my way back from Tabreez I passed seven men; two were riding pack animals, and were probably servants, the other five were mounted and armed with new magazine rifles and large knives; they had also leather bandoliers full of cartridges. All their equipment was new. They were Armenians on the way to Selmas.

It was reckoned that the revolutionists would be ready to commence operations on the 24th May (o. s.), *i.e.*, 5th June, with probably 1,500 men. Their intention was to attack the Kurds. It is believed that the Huntchaks, Tasknaks, and Erminists are all concerned in the enterprise. It is feared that the Kurds will retaliate, as they have threatened to do, by ravaging the villages on Persian territory that have given asylum to the revolutionists.

I had every reason to consider this information trustworthy.

Under these circumstances, it seemed advisable to go to Tabreez and have a personal interview with our Consul-General there. If the Persian Government could be induced to take the necessary action, it would be impossible for the revolutionists to carry out their designs. Moreover, if nothing were done it looked as if grave complications might ensue. The Kurds on a previous occasion have raided almost to Tabreez, and it is hardly likely that, in the event of such a thing happening again, the Russian troops, now in some considerable strength on the Turkish and Persian frontiers, would remain inactive. During the disturbances in Tabreez but a few weeks before, the Russian Consul there had threatened to telegraph for troops from Russia unless order was restored. A threat, I believe, not without its effect.

I thought it advisable to give the authorities in Van as early information as possible, in order that they might take the necessary measures, more particularly for protecting the Armenian villagers from ill-treatment by the Kurds. I therefore wrote a letter in French to Shemsudin Bey. He had, however, left before the letter reached Van. Shemshi Pasha, Commander of the division, was Acting Governor. As he cannot read French, the letter had to be translated, and by the next day its contents were public. This I consider regrettable. If suspicion should fall on any one as having given me information, the chances are that their lives will be in danger. At Selmas murders are of more than weekly occurrence. The revolutionists have established such terror among the people that nothing is refused them. They quarter themselves on the inhabitants, and exact contributions to their funds. Their manner of life is vicious in the extreme. I do not think particulars of this are desirable here. It is clear that the leaders of these men, at any rate, are no patriots, but reckless and dissolute ruffians. It is to be regretted that the prime movers of these enterprises should find asylum in England.

Before starting for Tabreez I managed to obtain an interview with some of the revolutionists in Selmas. Not that I anticipated that anything I could say would turn them from their purpose, but it appeared but just to warn them clearly of the consequences of their proposed action, and to let them know that their motives, viz., to provoke disorder and massacre in Turkey, were known and understood, and that if they persisted at the moment when the Turkish Government was, at any rate in the Van Vilayet, doing its best to protect the Armenians and to restore confidence, they would draw down on themselves and on their people universal detestation and disgust. They assured me that nothing was intended for the present. This I do not believe, though it is possible that the publicity now given to their designs may induce them to defer their execution.

With delay there is every chance of disagreement among their various sections, and if in the meantime the Russian and Persian Governments can be induced to take action, it will be impossible for them to assemble and prepare hostile expeditions against this province with the facility they have hitherto done.

Mr. Wood, Consul-General in Tabreez, telegraphed to our Legation at Tehran, and informed them of what I had reported to him, requesting them also to inform your Excellency.

I trust your Excellency approves and will sanction my journey to Tabreez, which was not contemplated when I applied for permission to go to the Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. S. ELLIOT.

No. 389.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 406.)
Therapia, June 18, 1897.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 404 of the 16th instant on the subject of an apprehended conflict between Kurds and Armenians on the Persian frontier in the neighbourhood of Lake Van, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Captain Elliot, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul for Van, has likewise received very disquieting reports from the Hekkiari district, lying further to the south. He telegraphed on the 2nd instant to the effect that the troops engaged in collecting taxes in Diz have exchanged shots with the villagers, and that the violent and oppressive conduct of the Turkish officials is calculated to bring about a rising, which would be met by a massacre at the hands of the troops and Kurds.

Captain Elliot suggested that Sheikh Sadik, who has collected a large force, should

be strongly dealt with from Constantinople without delay, and that the officials concerned should be suspended and brought to trial.

The Grand Vizier, however, whose attention I at once called to this serious state of affairs, had heard nothing of any disturbance in the Hekkiari district, and stated that the Acting Vali of Van had reported, in reply to an inquiry from the Porte, that there was no occasion to withdraw Sheikh Sadik. His Excellency promised to telegraph to Van for further information.

Captain Elliot telegraphed again on the 13th instant to inform me that the Acting Vali had dismissed the Kaïmakam and another official upon his representations, and thought he could keep Sheikh Sadik quiet. Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, however, considers it very desirable that he should visit the district in question without delay, and I have authorized him to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 390.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 409.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 21, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the state of public security in the neighbourhood of that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 390.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 20.)
Sir, *Trebizond, June 10, 1897.*

WITH the advent of spring brigands were expected to infest this province. I am glad to state that such is not the case. Few instances have there been of travellers rifled and houses sacked.

In saying so I should remark that the races inhabiting this strip of coast country have for ages borne the ill-repute of lawlessness, and that of late years only have those of a predatory disposition taken rather to the fixed pursuits of smugglers than to the wandering avocation of robbers.

What seems strange is that, even in these trouble times, brigandage should, on the whole, be eschewed, while contrabandism is practised largely. More surprising than this is, perhaps, the fact that the numerous thieves and murderers of the luckless Armenians left unpunished by the State remain quiet, falsifying thus the fears of the Greeks here and elsewhere since the outbreak of war. A few of them, it is true, made some abortive attempts to disturb public peace. They were, however, treated with such severity that the rest, who must have probably by now wasted away their ill-gotten gains by indulging in habits of higher living, saw the necessity of refraining from acts of violence and resigning themselves to the discomforts of poverty felt in general by the stagnation of trade and industry.

It is evident from all this, that wherever the Government wills it, the authorities can well maintain public order and security. A little promptness and some firmness, it would seem, are alone necessary to restrain the worst characters and prevent acts of depredation.

How this work is being carried on in this vilayet may be illustrated by the following examples. They represent the more important incidents of the last six weeks, exclusive of such minor offences as have been disposed of summarily by the application of the bastinado.

On the 8th ultimo at Foundoukli, a village four hours from Ordou, a band of eight Laz brigands, led by Keusseh Mehmed, plundered the house of an Armenian named Mousayian Khatchig, wounding him and his wife. They subsequently shot

two gendarmes. In a recent encounter near Kerassond seven were killed. The Chief, who is in hiding, is being sought for actively.

On the 11th ultimo at Kholomana, a village two hours west of Trebizond, the house of a well-to-do Greek, named Kromlioglou, was attacked during the night by some fifteen armed Turks. They looted it completely, stabbing and slashing badly two men and two women. On the following day the leading Mahommedans of the locality were brought down and retained in prison until one of their number disclosed the names of the malefactors, five of whom have since been caught and are undergoing trial.

In the west the country has for long been pestered by brigands. The notorious Armenian robber Minasoglou has at last, however, been forced to quit the vilayet, together with his six subdivisions of highwaymen, composed of Moslems and Christians. Seven of his Armenian followers, having surrendered themselves, were last week pardoned at Samsoun.

In the east the Surmeniotes have given, as usual, considerable annoyance. Three months ago two brothers, named Yacoub and Sulieman, were killed by four or five gendarmes in disguise. There happened to exist a blood feud between them and the Seymanoglous of Akho, who have since taken to the mountains on the borders of the Baiburt district, believing, or pretending to believe, that the partisans of the two brothers thought them the murderers and were after their lives. They have been committing great excesses on the peaceable inhabitants, and are now, therefore, being vigorously pursued by detachments of gendarmes, rural guards, and soldiers.

I would end by observing that many rowdies of this province had been induced by the authorities to leave for the seat of war. Most of them have, however, already returned, their services having been rejected by the army in Thessaly. It is to be hoped that they will give no trouble to the guardians of the peace here or elsewhere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 391.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 411.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1897.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 156 of the 15th instant, inclosing a letter from the Rev. A. R. Edington respecting the disturbed state of affairs in the Tergawar district, I have the honour to call your Lordship's attention to my despatch No. 406 of the 10th instant respecting the similar very disquieting reports received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van of the situation at Hekkiari, which lies farther to the south.

It was in consequence of these reports that I sanctioned Captain Elliot's proposal that he should visit the district in question. I had already made representations to the Sublime Porte through Mr. Block on the subject, and I spoke to the Foreign Minister personally last week about the danger of allowing the local authorities to take action against the Nestorians on the Persian frontier on the ground that they are preparing a revolutionary movement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 392.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 416.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 24, 1897.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 102 of the 22nd March last, stating that the Minister of the Interior had ordered the Vali of Mosul to dismiss Reshed Bey, Mudir of Barwarah, for his ill-treatment of the Nestorian Christians, I have the honour to report that, owing to the difficulties raised by the Vali against this measure, the matter was referred to the Grand Vizier, who referred it to the Council of State.

On learning this, I made strong representations to the Sublime Porte on the

subject through Mr. Block, with the result that the Council has now expressed the opinion that Reshed Bey should be dismissed, and that the Minister of the Interior has informed me that the necessary orders have been dispatched to that effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 393.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 417.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 25, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Major Bulman giving a complete list of the judgments delivered by the Special Commission sent to Tokat on account of the massacre in that town.

I have never ceased pressing the Porte for a confirmation of the capital sentences, and my colleagues have made similar representations. I regret to say that, although the sentences passed the Council of Ministers without comment, the Sultan's Iradé for their execution has not yet been obtained. At the meeting of the Ambassadors on the 19th instant Tewfik Pasha was pressed for a reply, and stated that he expected to receive His Majesty's orders immediately; but they have not yet been issued, and I fear that on this, as on former occasions, the Sultan will refuse his sanction to the infliction on Mussulmans of the punishment of death for the deliberate murder of his Christian subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 393.

Major Bulman to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 15.)
Sir, *Tokat, June* 5, 1897.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Commission has decided to leave all further cases to the ordinary Tribunal. In all, the Commission has tried 115 persons—of these, sixty-one are condemned, one died, one went mad, and fifty-two are acquitted; of those condemned, fifteen are condemned to death; five to fifteen years' imprisonment for murder; seven to ten years' imprisonment for pillage or as accomplices of murder; one to seven years' imprisonment for carrying invitations from Tokat to village of Madas to come and assist in the massacre; one to six years' imprisonment for pillage; two to five years' imprisonment as accomplices of murder; three to four years for pillage or accomplices of murder; twenty-four to three years' imprisonment for pillage or as accomplices of murder; one to two years' imprisonment for refusing to give up his arms when ordered to do so; one to one year's imprisonment for wounding; one to three months for stealing a watch. In addition, five were condemned in default—of these, four were condemned to death, and one to three years' imprisonment. The Juge d'Instruction has released 244, there not being sufficient evidence to send them to trial; twenty-eight remain in prison untried.

The Armenians complain that many of those released by the Juge d'Instruction ought to have been tried, and that they were not allowed to give evidence I mentioned these complaints to the Commission. Before the Commission the witnesses were allowed to say anything they liked without restriction. The Commission has successfully screened the Mutessarif, and all Government officials. A Turkish Commission could not be expected to do otherwise. The evidence given shows that several Turks informed the Mutessarif, early the morning of the disorders, that armed villagers had arrived in Tokat, and that the situation was dangerous, but that the Mutessarif did not leave his house till two hours later, immediately before the massacre began, and that he took no force of zaptiehs with him, nor made any attempt to check a threatened disturbance. The Mutessarif states that all was quiet half-an-hour after commencement, but the facts are that the disorders continued till evening and again on Saturday morning—an Armenian was killed, and many houses pillaged.

The acquittal of the officials is an avowal of the Turkish Government that a massacre can be organized and carried out without any blame attaching to any single

Government official. The Commission has dragged along with a wearisome attention to legal detail, wholly unnecessary in an extraordinary Tribunal. No opportunity of delay was lost, and it was quite clear that instructions had been received to delay procedure till the disorders at Tokat had been forgotten. The effect of the Commission can now, at best, amount to little. Had the ex-Vali, on his arrival after the massacre, had authority to punish the ringleaders, as I suggested in two telegrams, he was prepared to hang seventeen, and the effect of this summary punishment would have been great.

Whether the Commission remains wholly without result or not depends on whether the condemned are executed. No one believes that those condemned to imprisonment will remain long in prison, and the question whether the Powers can interfere with any authority in the affairs of Turkey, or whether Turkey can defy the Powers, will be decided in the plainest manner by the execution or otherwise of those condemned to death for their share in the massacre at Tokat.

It is incredible that this massacre, that is shown by the evidence, openly given during the proceedings, to have been arranged some time previously, could have been planned and carried out without the knowledge of the Local Government. It is equally incredible that the Local Government should have taken no steps to arrest it unless they were sure of their action being approved of at Constantinople. The acquittal of the Mutessarif merely confirms this. The Commandant, who is probably the most guilty, had, by a happy chance, laid himself open to a charge of murder, which was supported by ample evidence. His trial would have placed the Commission in a serious predicament, and his escape is a humiliating miscarriage of justice, that the last effort of resignation alone makes it possible to refer to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. BULMAN.

No. 394.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 419.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June* 25, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 365 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis respecting the attack on Turkish gendarmes by Kurds at Modeki.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 394.

Vice-Consul Crow to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 17.)
Sir, *Bitlis, June* 6, 1897.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 14 of the 25th ultimo on the subject of events in the Caza of Modeki, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency a supplementary account of the subsequent proceedings of the Local Government in regard to this matter.

No communication was held with the Kurds for some days after the events described in my preceding despatch. Conversation on the Modeki incident was formally prohibited in the bazaars, and several arrests were made to enforce this interdiction. Accounts received from survivors of the Alay Bey's party show that nineteen officers and men were killed on the side of the Turks. The Vali, meanwhile, availing himself of the influence of local Sheikhs, proceeded to temporize with the Kurds of Modeki with a view to restore their confidence in the Government. His overtures were so far successful that the Agas, who were themselves dismayed at the serious turn events had taken, expressed themselves desirous to conciliate the rebellious tribesmen, collected and paid the taxes, and solicited the return of the Government officials.

On the 31st ultimo two companies of infantry proceeded to Modeki to escort the members of the Local Government, who had fled to Bitlis after the murder of the

Kaïmakam. The Mission proceeded as far as Mizouk, a village on the outskirts of the disturbed district, where they were greeted by a message from the Kurds, warning them not to return to the Kaïmakamlik.

The members of the Government accordingly remained at Mizouk till the Vali, by the dispatch of secret emissaries, overcame the opposition, with the result that another company of infantry was sent some days later as a reinforcement, and the new Deputy Kaïmakam and his attendant officials resumed their functions at the seat of Government. Two companies were then withdrawn, and the remainder of the troops are permanently stationed at Modeki for the protection of the Government.

The Vali, with whom I have had several conversations on the subject, informs me that he wishes to get back again into the mountain, and, after reinstating the Government and restoring confidence, intends to punish the Kurds as soon as a fitting opportunity occurs.

His Excellency seems to think that such an opportunity will not be long in coming.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS EDWARD CROW.

No. 395.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 420.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 25, 1897.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish papers of the 23rd instant announced the appointment of Mehemed Shefki Effendi, ex-Mutessarif of Gumush-Khané, in the Vilayet of Trebizond, to be Mutessarif of Hekkiari.

The only information respecting this official in the possession of Her Majesty's Embassy is contained in a despatch from Mr. Longworth, Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, who describes him as "a Constantinople book-worm, and evidently a disappointed man, with greater honesty than energy." He had at one time some employment in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, has travelled in Europe, and understands French, English, and Italian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.